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Wednesday July 16 1997

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The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

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Manipulator or manipulated?

The games Di plays

G2 with European weather

Fashion maestro shot dead

A tribute to the king of glamour

Style, G2 pages 8/9

Environment

Duped by the hunter's rallying cry

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Huge hunt for lone gunman who targeted Italian fashion tycoon

Versace: a contract killing?

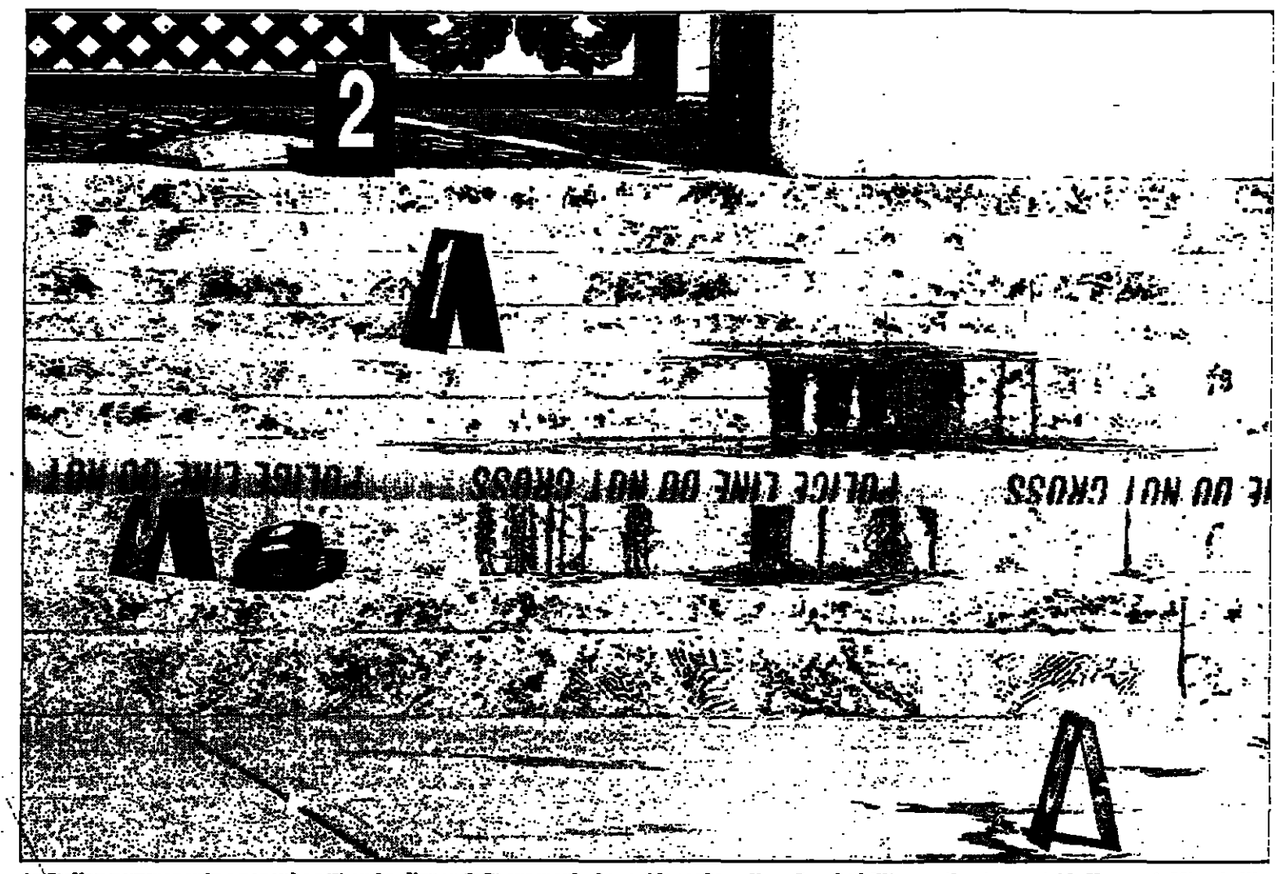
Gianni Versace: Shot dead outside his Miami Beach home

'I am devastated by the loss of a great and talented man' **— Princess Diana**

'It is a shock comparable to hearing that John Lennon had died' **— Jeff Banks, designer**

'I have never met anyone so loved and admired by so many people' **— Sarah Doukas, model agent**

'His death is a huge loss to the industry' **— British Fashion Council**



An Italian newspaper in a paper bag (2) and a slipper (left) are marked as evidence by police after the killing on the steps outside Versace's Miami villa

Ed Vulliamy in Washington and John Hooper in Rome

THE fashion guru and tycoon Gianni Versace, founder of one of haute couture's most flamboyant and renowned empires, was shot dead outside his villa in Miami Beach yesterday morning in what police believe was a carefully planned murder.

The chief of Miami Beach police, Richard Barreto, said: "I believe that he was targeted," but refused to confirm a rumour that a contract had been put out on Versace's life.

By last night, the FBI had launched a huge manhunt for the killer, a white male in his twenties who walked up and shot Versace twice in the head at point-blank range. *The designer was opening the gate to the villa after returning from buying an Italian newspaper at a favourite local restaurant, the News Cafe.*

Only days ago, Versace, aged 50, was being showered with praise for his latest collection at the Paris show, acknowledging applause from the catwalk flanked by supermodels.

Yesterday, there were pools of blood on the pavement outside his elegant villa after the shooting at 9am.

Mr Barreto indicated that the handgun used in the murder had been sent for examination. Asked if there was anyone else in the villa at the time of the murder, he said: "My information is that he was alone." He refused to comment on a local rumour that there had been an unspecified "incident" involving Versace outside his home two nights ago.

An eyewitness, Eddie Biachi, said: "There were two shots fired in his head. The police came very fast; they were trying to help him, revive him."

A surgeon, Phillip Villanueva, said Versace had been shot in the back of the head.

Al Boza, a police spokesman, said Versace had been opening the gate to his home on Ocean Drive when he was approached by a "white male, aged about 25, wearing a grey T-shirt, black backpack and black shorts, and a white hat ... who shot him at point-blank range".

Local television reports said the man's clothing had been dumped in a nearby garage and had been recovered *for analysis by police.*

Witnesses said the killer got into a vehicle which looked like a taxi. The driver has not been found.

There were three theories last night: a killing by a jealous, obsessed maniac; a contract killing, either the result of a love affair or professional relationship turned sour; or by the Mafia or some other criminal mob.

There had been no sign of any overt threat to Versace, at least none that was recorded by police in the United States or Italy.

The nature of the murder suggests that the killer either knew Versace personally or had "staked him out".

Versace, the first of Italy's leading designers to confirm that he was gay, went into the fashion business 25 years ago, *setting up his own house with* his sister Donatella. There had been tensions recently over succession within the vast company.

Despite becoming more reclusive, Versace was a popular figure on the social circuit of Ocean Drive's "beautiful people" and entertained his friends frequently and in style.

His elegant, three-storey mock-Spanish villa was a landmark on the fashion circuit, although in a quiet stretch of Ocean Drive, away from the hotels and the famous Art Deco strip.

Versace had clothed the world's best-known women, including Princess Diana, who "relaunched" herself recently as a glamour queen in Vanity Fair magazine wearing a dress from his latest collection. *She said yesterday* she was "devastated" by the news of his death.

In Versace's native Italy, the news provoked disbelief and concern over what could emerge from the police inquiry. The Milan fashion business is pivotal to the success of one of the world's biggest textile industries and its good name has been sullied twice recently.

Last May, Versace's brother, Santo, was convicted of bribery along with two of Italy's leading designers. In 1995, Maurizio Gucci, of the luggage-to-frocks luxury goods dynasty, was shot dead outside his office in Milan. His wife, Patrizia Reggiani Martinelli, was arrested and charged with ordering his murder earlier this year. As Versace acknowledged in an *interview two years ago,* there have been rumours — vigorously denied by the family — that the company founded to market his creations had underworld links. In 1995, the Independent on Sunday paid substantial damages for what it admitted were libels about his business practices.

Yesterday, many Italians noted privately that the shots to the back of Versace's neck were typical of an underworld *hit.*

Fellow designers expressed incredulity. "The news of Gianni Versace's death has left me in a state of shock," said Giorgio Armani. "My reaction is one of revolt against such an unnatural and violent death."

Bullets strike at empire, page 3; Obituary, page 10; Style, G2, page 8

BA demotes Tory spin doctor Tim Bell

'Outdated' Thatcherite PR guru gives way to Labour supporter

Seumas Milne and Ian King

SIR TIM Bell, spin Svengali of Margaret Thatcher's rise to power, has been ousted from his position as leading PR adviser to British Airways on its hugely expensive current industrial dispute because of his "outdated" Conservative connections.

Sir Tim has been usurped by long-time Labour supporter Alan Parker, whose firm Brunswick Public Relations was already in charge at BA's bad-tempered annual meeting yesterday. The move reflects the change of political climate, and BA's widely-acknowledged failure to win the media battle over the dispute.

BA and Brunswick sources confirmed that Mr Parker's firm would now play the key PR role in the airline's industrial relations problems, though Sir Tim's Lowe Bell *will continue to advise on* general strategy. Senior BA executives were anxious to dispel any suggestion that Sir Tim had been sacked.

Bob Ayling, BA chief executive, said last night that he had a good relationship with Sir Tim, which he did not want to damage.

Asked to comment on BA's decision to downgrade his firm's role — reportedly taken over the weekend — Sir Tim said: "It's news to me — I've had no contact from BA *saying* that anything has changed. We advise on all their activities."

But BA management is acutely aware that it has lost the PR war — notably in its tactically-disastrous decision to threaten staff that they would be sacked or sued if they went on strike — and, in the words of one BA insider, Sir Tim has "the wrong friends and contacts".

Tim Bell: 'No word from BA that anything has changed'

Mr Ayling defended the company's hard line in the disputes with cabin crew and catering staff at the annual meeting, but conceded that BA had lost "tens of millions of pounds" as a result of last week's three-day cabin staff walkout. That would create a "big hole" in the firm's results.

The aftermath of the strike, particularly the continuing high levels of staff sickness, hit BA services yesterday, with only 60 per cent of short-haul and 75 per cent of long haul flights making it out of Heathrow. Talks are exepected to resume with the Transport and General Workers' Union this week.

But during stormy exchanges at the meeting, Mr Ayling rejected accusations of intimidation, pledging that there would be no sanctions against staff who had gone on strike or phoned in sick during the stoppage. One employee, Del Page, nevertheless accused Mr Ayling of being the most divisive figure in BA's history. Robert Webster — a BA employee for 28 years — said Mr Ayling had brought morale to its lowest ever.

Brunswick, which has already been advising BA on other issues, has in recent years displaced Lowe Bell as London's biggest and most profitable financial public relations firm. Like several other financial PR firms, it supplied staff on placements to Labour and the Tories during the general election.

But Sir Tim is indelibly linked with the Conservatives, whose election campaign he worked on. Lady Thatcher called him "my line to the British people" in the 1980s and he played an important behind-the-scenes role during the 1984-5 miners' strike. BA drafted in Lowe Bell four years ago in the aftermath of the scandal over BA's "dirty tricks" campaign against Virgin.

A BA adviser said last night of Lowe Bell's influence on the airline: "There are too many people in this company who are still acting as though the last government were still in power". A PR industry insider described BA's decision to "switch horses in midstream" as "very drastic crisis management".

BA chief booed, page 11

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Sketch

Members mind their language

Simon Hoggart

THE Commons was in a froth of modernisation yesterday. This happens every now and again, and is usually led by Labour members, outraged that traditions which have served the old place well for centuries are still in existence.

Yesterday Rhodri Morgan *(Lab, Cardiff W)* wanted to know when Ann Taylor, the President of the Council, was going to abolish the use of Norman French for communications between the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

It takes a bit of nerve for a Welshman to complain about the dangers of bilingualism, but that wasn't going to stop him. It was 550 years, he said, since anyone had made a speech here in French. What is more, the language that was used to shunt bills from one House to the other was not even real grammatical Norman French.

Moments later, I was walking down flagged corridors, through intricately carved porticos, past velvet-flocked wallpaper that would not have disgraced a upmarket Balti house, deep into the recesses of the House of Peers. Here a surprisingly young man handed me a book containing the mysterious phrases and their antique spellings.

When, for example, the Commons sends a Bill to the Lords, the clerks write on it: *"Soit baillé aux Seigneurs"*. According to an old Larousse, the archaic word *"baillé"* could mean "handed over", a wooden canopy, or else refers to the Venetian Ambassador to Constantinople.

So the meaning is clear to anyone: the Bill should be sent to the Venetian Ambassador, who can give it to the Lords when he is next in town.

When the peers agree to an amendment, and add some more of their own, they say: *"Ceste Amendement avecque des Amendemens, les Seigneurs sont assentus."* If they don't like the bill, they say: *"Ceste Bille est remise aux Communes avecque une Raison,"* which means sent back with an explanation.

The Queen makes the bill law by writing *"La Reine le veult"* on the bottom. When she is succeeded by Prince Charles (or Prince William), he will write: *"Le Roy le veult,"* meaning that Lord Hattersley approves.

I honestly don't see what Mr Morgan's problem is. I think it is very sweet that we still conduct some of our affairs in the language of the Conqueror. Perhaps by the same token he would like to knock down Westminster Hall, which dates from the same era, and replace it with a purpose-built office block with conference suites and health spa.

I would go further. If I were Leader of the House, I would pass a bill obliging all its proceedings to be conducted in Norman French. This would have many advantages. By obliging members to translate their thoughts into this attractive if antique language, it would force them to think carefully before opening their mouths. It would also make John Prescott much easier to understand.

Other MPs wanted to tart up the daily Order Paper. The select committee on modernisation (a body new to me, but I don't think I would like it) wants to recast this in "straightforward English", making it "more user-friendly".

"How about a pop-up picture book?" one Tory snarled. Nicholas Soames popped up (imagine how much cardboard it would cost to put his 3D effigy in every Order Paper) and roared: "There is absolutely nothing wrong with the Order Paper, and it should be left alone!"

Quite right. The Order Paper is perfectly clear to any literate person who has spent more than a day in the House and needs no changing at all.

Finally David Winnick declared that, since MPs — unlike the clerks — wore modern dress, "we should abolish wigs and the rest of it".

All eyes swivelled to the happily grinning Tory MP for Lichfield, whose name I am sadly no longer permitted to mention.

New grading system to identify incompetent staff ☐ Unions attack Woodhead over 'crude' plans

Crackdown on bad teachers

John Carvel
Education Editor

CHRIS Woodhead, the chief inspector of schools, yesterday ran into a hail of criticism from the teacher unions when he announced a grading system to identify incompetent staff in confidential reports to their heads.

He said the new procedure should lead to the dismissal of more bad classroom performers, but it would also give heads better management information on all their staff.

"If teachers are not doing the job that they're paid to do, they shouldn't be in post, [but] more teachers doing a brilliant job will get greater recognition for everything they are putting into the future of our country," he said.

Under current rules, inspectors grade lessons on a seven-point scale. They are obliged to tell heads when they find a first-class teacher with a majority of lessons in grades one or two (excellent or very good). They must also identify the worst teachers whose lessons score six or seven (poor or very poor).

Mr Woodhead criticised his inspectors for failing to mark enough teachers in the bottom two grades, suggesting they were reluctant to confront bad performers with evidence of their inadequacy. Last year only 88 teachers were marked down in this way in more than 2,000 school inspections.

From September, inspectors will for the first time report to heads on the performance of all their staff without having to give reasons to the teachers. The information will not be disclosed to parents.

Lessons will continue to be marked on the seven-point scale, but reports on teachers' performance will be "simplified" into three broad bands. The lowest will include teachers giving "unsatisfactory" lessons (grade five) as well as poor or very poor ones.

A spokesman for the Office for Standards in Education said the number of teachers falling into this bottom band might correspond with Mr Woodhead's controversial estimate that there are 13,500 incompetent teachers.

He said the aim was to provide heads with better management information, but acknowledged that reports to heads would not distinguish between poor teachers and those whose performance was merely unsatisfactory.

Government sources said the changes were foreshadowed in the education white paper last week, which also promised a shorter warning of inspections to reduce disruption and an appeals mechanism for schools unhappy with an inspection report.

The white paper made no specific reference to the new grading scale, however, and the teaching unions were angry that such an important change should have slipped out without ministerial comment.

The new grading system comes as the Government is consulting local education authorities and teaching unions on ways of removing poor teachers from their jobs more quickly. These are likely to be based on performance against annual targets as well as six-yearly Ofsted inspections.

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, said the new grading was another stick to beat teachers. "We are going to see a crude system of judge-and-run by Ofsted inspectors, often basing their views on visits of between 10 and 15 minutes to each lesson. Everyone agrees that incompetent teachers should be appropriately dealt with, but setting up such a crude system is an insult to the professionalism of most teachers," he said.

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, predicted a flood of appeals from teachers against "inadequate snapshot judgments". Peter Smith, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said the quality of teachers could not be assessed by "a wild stab in the dark" based on limited classroom observation.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, approved the new system, but warned against it being misused to justify Mr Woodhead's "unfounded" estimate of the extent of incompetence.

Teachers doing a good job will get more recognition under the new scheme, it is claimed

Making the grade

GRADE A: Teachers who are thought to be "excellent" or "very good", promoting very high educational standards.

GRADE B: Teachers who are "good" or "satisfactory", promoting sound educational standards.

GRADE C: Teachers who are "unsatisfactory", "poor" or "very poor", promoting very low educational standards.

Inspectors' judgments are based on questions about the teachers:

- ☐ Do they have a secure understanding of the subjects taught?
- ☐ Do they set high expectations to challenge pupils and deepen their knowledge?
- ☐ Do they plan effectively?
- ☐ Do they employ methods that meet all pupils' needs?
- ☐ Do they manage the pupils well and achieve high standards of discipline?
- ☐ Do they use time and resources effectively?
- ☐ Do they assess pupils' work thoroughly?
- ☐ Do they use homework effectively?

Catholic girl shot dead as Blair talks to loyalists

David Sharrock
Ireland Correspondent

FEARS of a renewed sectarian killing campaign in Northern Ireland were heightened yesterday when a teenage Catholic girl was shot four times in the head as she lay sleeping in the home of her Protestant boyfriend.

Bernadette Martin, aged 18, from Lurgan, Co Armagh, had been staying the night with her boyfriend's family at their home in the predominantly Protestant village of Aghalee, Co Antrim, on the shores of Lough Neagh.

The shooting occurred at 4am yesterday and a man was subsequently arrested. Police launched a murder inquiry.

John O'Dowd, a local Sinn Fein councillor, said: "The brutal attack on a young Catholic woman bears all of the hallmarks of a sectarian shooting." He said the killing, on the day when loyalist leaders were holding their first meeting with Tony Blair since he became prime minister, pointed up "the double standards still at play within British policy".

David Ervine of the Progressive Unionist Party — linked to the Ulster Volunteer Force — and Gary McMichael of the Ulster Democratic Party, which is linked to the Ulster Defence Association, said they had assured Mr Blair that the loyalist ceasefire remained intact.

Mr Ervine said he had no doubt that substantive talks would begin on September 15 as scheduled. He said: "The level of discipline shown over the last few weeks has been quite incredible from these loyalist groups. I think that the Prime Minister recognised how things might have gone and his parting words to us were to try and maintain the situation as it now with no loyalist violence."

Mr McMichael said: "We are doing everything we can. We are hanging on by the skin of our teeth." He added it was "make your mind up time" for Sinn Fein.

Mr Blair reassured the loyalist leaders that the "peace train" would go ahead in September with or without Sinn Fein. The loyalists said they were relaxed about renewed government contacts with Sinn Fein.

But while those discussions were taking place, Mo Mowlam, Northern Ireland Secretary, came under pressure in the Commons to make a statement on her officials' contacts with Sinn Fein following assurances that meetings had been called off after the murder of two RUC officers in Lurgan on June 16.

The 400 extra troops drafted into Ulster during the marching crisis last week headed home to England after the concerns of continued serious violence over the weekend proved unfounded.

Elsewhere in Northern Ireland a man was shot in both legs in Newry, Co Down during the day in what appeared to be an IRA punishment attack. Earlier, a 32-year-old man was also shot in both legs in the town as the IRA admitted shooting two other men in the legs in Newry on Sunday.

RUC officers searching the area around the house in Aghalee, Co Antrim, in which Bernadette Martin was shot dead

Review

Hope growing in the Garden

Edward Greenfield

Farewell Gala
Covent Garden/BBC2

IF ANYONE felt apprehensive about the future of the Royal Opera House, no one was showing it.

After all the disasters and criticisms, this was a gala of enjoyment and hope, closing an era at Covent Garden before 2½ years of renovation and rebuilding, but pointing forward to another time.

It turned out to be as starry an event as you could want, culminating in the return of Placido Domingo as an incomparable Otello in the final scene of Verdi's opera, preceded by a much younger superstar, already bitingly powerful in Iago's creed, Bryn Terfel.

Terfel also led the ensemble in the final fugue from Verdi's last opera, Falstaff, again conducted by Sir Georg Solti, music director laureate, at 84 as electric as ever in his vigour.

Special ovations had come earlier for Sir Colin Davis, as another previous music director, and for Edward Downes, now in his 45th year conducting the Royal Opera, an inspired interpreter here of Puccini, Donizetti and Verdi.

Yet the hero of the occasion, as he certainly had been two days earlier in an incandescent account of Wagner's Die Meistersinger, was Bernard Haitink. Music director extraordinary, inspirer and wise leader as well as searching interpreter, he alone in all the wrangles has remained untouched by criticism.

He has succeeded in blunting the detrimental effect on the company of 2½ years without a home. By including big ensemble works such as Wagner's Parsifal and Boito's Mefistofele, he hopes to keep the company substantially together.

As always in such events, the main problem was cramming everyone in, and ensembles were the order of the day — not just in the operatic items, but in the ballet ones too, which in their way took priority, opening and closing each half of the programme. It was easier with ballet, too, to have items properly staged, and besides the ensembles, splendid party pieces came from such magnetic dancers as Sylvie Guillem, Darcey Bussell, Irek Mukhamedov and Tetsuya Kumakawa.

The one operatic item fully staged was the very first, the pub scene from Britten's Peter Grimes with the storm raging outside, still electrifying in Elijah Moshinsky's skeletal production.

How apt that the first solo voices to be heard were those of two veterans, Elizabeth Bainbridge (32 years with the company) as Auntie and Sarah Walker as Mrs Sedley, joined later not just by Anthony Rolfe Johnson, inspired in the title role, but by Heather Harper as Ellen Orford and Robert Tear as the drunken preacher, Bob Boles.

This review appeared in some editions yesterday.

Government to impose tough targets on water companies to cut leakage from mains

Paul Brown
Environment Correspondent

LEAKAGE rates from water mains must be cut from 30 per cent to between 10 and 15 per cent, environment minister Michael Meacher said yesterday, warning that the Government would, if necessary, enforce controls on companies to make them comply.

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, said: "We want controlling leaks put before shareholder dividends, and the good news is that the companies have accepted that."

Following the water summit held immediately after the election, the water companies had agreed to mend customer leaks for free, a service previously carried out only by a few firms.

About a quarter of all the treated water in the mains is lost in the ground between the mains and customers' properties. Now, anyone who suspects a leak can call on the free service to locate and repair it, though pipes inside the house will remain the responsibility of customers.

Mandatory leakage targets, gradually getting tougher each year, will be imposed on each water company by the watchdog, Ofwat, and approved by the Department of the Environment.

Because leakage rates are so high no target date has been set for reaching the 10 to 15 per cent level. Massive investment in repairing old mains will be needed.

Thames Water, widely vilified for having the highest leakage rate in the country with 38 per cent in 1996, said it had reduced the leakage to 30 per cent and hoped to get the total down to below 20 per cent by 2000.

Anglian Water, the only company which has publicly said that 10 to 15 per cent is achievable, said it had already got its leakage rates to below 20 per cent.

Mr Prescott said: "When we were in New York for the Earth Summit we looked at the city's water supply and found they had already tackled the leakage problem — it was down to 10 per cent. If they can do it, so can we."

Ofwat's National Consumer Council yesterday accused the 29 water companies of putting dividends before customer service and the plugging of leaks. It demanded an immediate, substantial cut in customer water bills.

Pamela Taylor, chief executive of the Water Companies Association, said: "Our companies recognise they are not operating in the same world as two years ago. Our companies are keen to co-operate with the new government to cut leaks and improve water efficiency."

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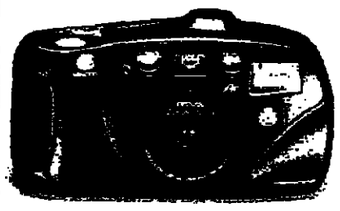

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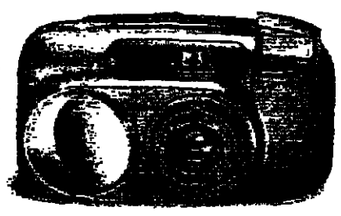

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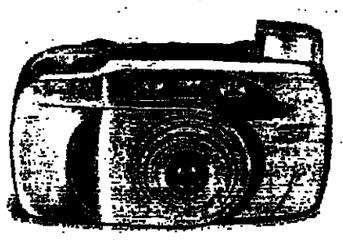

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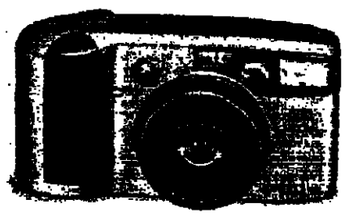

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The killing of Versace

Versace at the presentation of his Autumn/Winter 1997/98 collection in Milan. He was the first of Italy's leading designers to confirm he was gay

GIANNI VERSACE

- 1946 Gianni Versace was born in Reggio Calabria in southern Italy
- 1971 Moved to Milan to work as a fashion designer drawing his first collections for Genny, Complice and Callaghan
- 1978 Presents his first collection with his own name
- 1982 Named best fashion designer for his 1982/83 Autumn/Winter collection for women
- 1984 Launches the highly successful fragrance for men 'Versace 'l'Homme'
- 1986 The President of the Italian Republic, Francesco Cossiga, confers the decoration of 'Commendatore della Repubblica Italiana' on him
- 1993 Wins the Council of Fashion Designers of America's much-coveted America Fashion Oscar

The company

- 300 boutiques around the world, 3,000 sales points in department stores

Sales (1996): £333m

Pre-tax profit (1996): £65m

- Versace jeans cost from £90, evening gowns from £10,000

Scene of the crime . . . Versace's Miami Beach villa

Bullets strike at heart of an empire

Detectives try to unravel the private life of a public man to solve mystery of Miami assassin

John Hooper in Rome and Clare Longrigg on the violent death of Gianni Versace

Liz Hurley in the dress held together with safety pins

LIZA MINNELLI was to have been there. Diana Ross and Irene Papas too.

It was to have been called Woman under the Stars and to have been held on the Spanish Steps in Rome tonight — a fashion extravaganza for prime-time Italian television, led off by 20 minutes of Gianni Versace creations.

Naomi Campbell was to have been one of his models for the occasion.

Last night, plans for the show were in ruins. Riccardo Gai, owner of Milan's leading model agency, said: "None of the girls feels like taking to the catwalk. They are all in shock. To ask them to work a few hours afterwards seems to me to be genuinely impossible."

In Miami, however, there was no night off for detectives examining the possibility that one of the world's most famous fashion names could have been the target of a hit.

In trying to establish if anyone might have wanted Versace dead, police began to sift through the details of his personal life and business affairs. It did not promise to be easy: Versace was protective of his business reputation.

In a newspaper interview in 1995 he denied any connection with the Mafia of his native Italy. "They even say I am Mafioso. That can hurt you. It can hurt your family values," he said. "But not anymore. They have said whatever there is possible to say about you. At this point what you have to do, what you have to say is, who cares?"

A year earlier he had sued another newspaper over libels in an article about his business practices. He received substantial damages.

But last year, the Versace empire was caught up in the *Mani Pulite* — or Clean Hands — crackdown of the early 1990s on corruption in Italian civic life.

Santo, Versace's older brother and the company's business brains, was found guilty of paying bribes to revenue guards. His conviction came at the end of a trial which sent shivers of horror through the Milan fashion world.

Two years earlier, the same prosecutors who had accused the media tycoon and former prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, and others with tax evasion laid charges against some of fashion's most distinguished figures.

Giorgio Armani plea-bargained his way out of a trial. But Santo Versace insisted on pleading his innocence and was tried alongside Gianfranco Ferre and Mariuccia Mandelli ("Krizia").

All three were given 14-month suspended sentences. They had earlier paid damages roughly equivalent to the amount of the bribes they were charged with paying. Santo Versace handed over £100,000. He is currently appealing against his conviction.

Gianni, who was never implicated, stood by his big brother. The business had always been a family affair, from the moment the youngest child of a poor Calabrian family followed his seamstress mother's advice to learn from people "who are better than you".

Santo and the boys' sister, Donatello — a bleached-blonde leather-clad rock chick — are co-owners of the business, respectively president and vice-president, keeping a firm hold on the reins.

"Donatella and Santo make me feel more complete, give a sense of continuity to my work. I am always the baby. Perhaps it is this infantile part that lets me live and exist, design and love fashion as much as I do," Versace once wrote.

The business was based on his creative genius, his talent for excelling at excess. His every move was accompanied by a storm of hype. He never appeared without a rippling crowd of celebrities. They fed each others' egos: he dolled them up like cartoon rock stars in rhinestones and gold; they appeared in his advertisements or just appeared when he needed press cameras — Prince, Elton John, Madonna, Elizabeth Taylor.

Now the surviving Versace siblings will have to keep the empire afloat without the man who made the family name world-renowned. A flotation, on both sides of the Atlantic, planned by Santo for next year, was inevitably in doubt last night.

Versace's bloody demise represents a potentially devastating blow to a company which has grown at a vertiginous rate since its creation 19 years ago.

Last year, it made pre-tax profits of more than £60 million, selling almost £600 million worth of goods directly or indirectly and had a worldwide turnover of almost £300 million.

But only just over half its sales came from clothing. A quarter derived from accessories and 15 per cent from Versace-branded scents.

The riches that success brought to Versace allowed him to live, as he put it, in "the best places in the world". The Miami Beach hacienda in Ocean Drive where he was gunned down was an oasis of calm, his familiar crest over the monumental gateway. Palms surrounded an ornate swimming-pool; the library was lined with glossy art books and a wall-sized television screen.

A vast, lavish palazzo in Milan housed his art collection and provided accommodation for supermodels. His villa on the shores of Lake Como had an elaborately landscaped garden.

He had grown bored of Milan and opened an opulent multi-million pound emporium in London, furnished and frescoed like a Roman villa in marble and bronze.

The New Bond Street store was closed yesterday as a sign of mourning and tributes of flowers lay in the doorway.

Yesterday, the Versace empire made almost no comment on the murder. In a statement, Santo and Donatello confirmed "the tragic news, which has already been spread by the media, that their brother Gianni has died in Miami today. They thank all those who wish to respect their silence in grief".

There was also no comment from assistants in Versace's shops in and around the Via Montenapoleone, the centre of the Milan fashion world.

Versace's house in Milan was shuttered and barred. A woman employee emerged in tears from the building a few hours after the news of his death. With her head buried in her hands, she murmured: "It is not right; it is not right", before being driven away.

Jeff Banks, the British designer, compared Versace's death to the 1980 murder of John Lennon. "I had known Gianni personally for 10 years and it is a shock comparable to hearing that John Lennon had died. It is horrific," he said.

Yesterday Liz Hurley, whose career owes much to a Versace dress held together with safety pins, said: "Gianni was a dear friend of mine and I am going to miss him horribly. He will be hideously missed by everyone."

Gianfranco Ferre called the murder "absurd, inexplicable, terrible". He said Versace's death had left "a huge vacuum in our world".

Petrol company to hire lone parents

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

PETROL retailer Total Oil yesterday committed itself to take on up to 100 lone parents over the next year in a move hailed as a breakthrough for the Government's welfare-to-work strategy.

Ministers urged other employers to follow the lead set by Total, which will offer posts mainly at service stations to lone parents who undergo a training course run by voluntary groups.

Phil de Boos-Smith, Total's managing director, said he believed lone parents would make particularly efficient and loyal staff.

The training course has been set up by Gingerbread, the lone parents' group, and Training for Life, a charity that helps the unemployed into work. Funding is being provided mainly by the Government and the European Social Fund.

Lone parents, initially in London, will be offered part-time training with travel and childcare costs covered, work experience and assistance with job searching.

Total is undertaking to recruit between 50 and 100 of those who complete the course over the next 12 months.

Mr de Boos-Smith said that if this proved successful the company would be prepared to increase its commitment.

Next week, the Government starts its New Deal programme for lone parents. In eight trial areas, lone parents living on benefit with a youngest child aged five or over will be invited to work with a personal adviser on ways of finding employment.

Research published today suggests that such welfare-to-work programmes are of greater benefit to women than men.

The independent Policy Studies Institute analysed work trials, job clubs and the job interview guarantee scheme.

Work trials were found to increase by 35-40 per cent the chances of employment for both men and women, but the other two programmes were far more effective for women.

Michael White, one of the researchers, said new thinking was overdue on ways to help skilled male workers who had slipped into long-term unemployment.

"It was my duty to tell the truth about one of the most important parts of the Holocaust. So many fairytales have been told about it. So many books that were nonsense. Rubbish, total rubbish."

Hermann Arndt tells Jim White why he has broken cover

Portrait, G2 page 10

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The 'Houdini of Irish politics' remains true to form

Haughey breezes through downfall

David Sharrock
Ireland Correspondent

THEY came not to praise but to bury him. Charles Haughey, the turbulent former Irish taoiseach who quoted Shakespeare upon his retirement five years ago, yesterday played the part his nation expected of him in the final act of the destruction of his reputation.

Arriving at Dublin Castle hours before he was due to give evidence to a tribunal that he lied about cash gifts valued above £1 million, Mr Haughey deprived the media scrum of the pictures of his humiliation.

But once in the witness stand, the "Houdini of Irish politics" who amassed a personal fortune on a state salary, was subjected to two hours of brutal questioning about his financial affairs.

The 71-year-old former Fianna Fail leader often asked for questions to be repeated but managed to look as confident and relaxed as he always did in his heyday as "the Boss".

He admitted to the tribunal examining payments to politicians that while in power he received £1.3 million from the former stores chief, Ben Dunne. He claimed he was unaware of his benefactor's identity until 1993 after leaving office. And he insisted it in no way affected the manner in which he performed his duties. Mr Dunne, who made the gifts between 1987 and 1991, has separately insisted no political favours were sought or received.

As for Mr Dunne's claim that he personally handed over cheques worth more than £200,000 to the taoiseach at his mansion because he was looking unhappy, Mr Haughey said he had "no recollection" of the event.

This was as close the tribunal got to an apology for having misled it until last week: "In hindsight, I accept that a lot of the problems and embarrassment I have caused could have been avoided if I had been more forthcoming."

The former finance minister and accountant said that his private finances had been "perhaps peripheral to my life."

Under cross-examination from tribunal lawyer Denis McCullough, Mr Haughey insisted he left all financial matters to his accountant. Mr McCullough countered: "As an accountant, Mr Haughey, did you never wonder where you were getting money?"

"No, I was a very quiescent accountant," replied Mr Haughey.

Amid laughter, Mr McCullough flashed back: "But you had been a minister of finance!"

Mr Haughey said that when he left government in February 1992 he was determined to leave public life firmly behind. He also wanted to leave his followers free to manage things in their own way.

The effect of this transition was that his recollection of events became increasingly remote and diffused, he added.

Last night Mr Haughey was back home in the splendour of Abbeville House, cushioned by his famous wine cellar, stud farm, yacht and private island.

He may be facing a two-year prison stretch and £10,000 fine, but nobody in the Irish Republic has ever been jailed for tax evasion and the view from the streets of Dublin was that the country's favourite political rogue will survive again.

Former taoiseach Charles Haughey leaving Dublin Castle yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: ERIC LUKE

Churchill the greatest, say Euro scholars

John Ezard

CHURCHILL and Einstein emerge from a Europe-wide poll of intellectuals today as the two greatest Europeans of the century.

The poll put the conqueror of Hitler and the discoverer of relativity first and second among those who made "the greatest contribution to European civilisation".

Among the rest of the top 10 were the unravellers of DNA, Francis Crick and James Watson; Sigmund Freud; Pope John Paul II; and Pablo Picasso.

The list, in the first issue of the new magazine Europe Quarterly, was nominated by 56 leading academics and heads of national institutions in 24 countries.

No women feature in the first 10 — though Baroness Thatcher squeaks into the top 40 thanks to a vote from Dr Tamara Shumnaya of the Russian Museum of the Revolution.

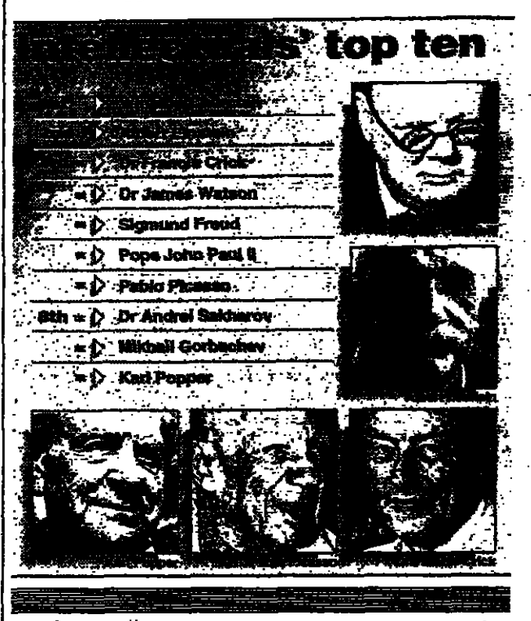
The lack of other women surprised the quarterly's editor, Maggie Lennon. "Despite all the talk about Europe, it seems the continent is still profoundly influenced by the effects of the second world war."

She would have voted for Marie Curie, Anne Frank, the mystic Simone Weil, or the German socialist revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg.

Last night the Fawcett Society for women's rights named its own top six: Marie Curie; Rosalind Franklin, whose crystallography supplied the first clue to DNA; Marie Stopes, pioneer of birth control; Gro Harlem Bruntland, pioneer of the concept of sustainable development; author Simone de Beauvoir, author of The Second Sex; and its own founder, Millicent Fawcett.

Churchill won the intellectuals' poll with eight votes. Einstein got five. Candidates with single votes included composer Bela Bartok, authors Samuel Beckett, Thomas Mann, James Joyce and Franz Kafka, and the humanitarian Albert Schweitzer.

Europe Quarterly, 3 Rutland Square, Edinburgh, EH1 2AS (£30 annually)



Hisses for populist music choice

The Spice Girls' album was described by judges' chairman as 'the holiday novel of pop'

Prodigy, whose The Fat Of The Land is at number one in both British and the US charts

Spice Girls' shortlisting derided by press

Roni Size's New Forms was one of the surprises on the list

Dan Glaister
Arts Correspondent

THE inclusion of the Spice Girls on the shortlist for this year's Mercury Music Prize is, for one critic, like awarding the Booker prize to Jilly Cooper. But the judges for the award for best British and Irish album of the year were undeterred by allegations of populism when they announced a shortlist yesterday that included the five-girl line-up.

The announcement was greeted by hissing from an audience made up of the press and members of the music industry.

The chairman of the judges, Simon Frith, defended the inclusion of the Spice Girls on the list. "The Mercury Music Prize has always said that it's trying to reflect all the music in Britain. If the Booker did that it might be a more interesting prize." The Spice Girls' Spice album, he said, was "the holiday novel of pop".

"There's a tradition of British crafty pop. It's an aspect of British pop that has always been undervalued. They are a classic example of a group with an image. They have crafted an image that is unique. But in the end I don't think they would have been as big as they are if they didn't have such good songs. We will look back with some affection on their songs."

As well as the fivesome, the shortlist includes the two big rock albums of the moment, two classical albums and two big surprises. The Fat Of The Land by The Prodigy, which is this week at number one in both the British and the US album charts, was the most predictable inclusion on the list. Radiohead's OK Computer, which has received near-unanimous critical acclaim, was also widely tipped to be included.

The two surprises are New Forms by Roni Size and Trailer Park by Beth Orton. New Forms, which only reached number 34 in the album charts following its release three weeks ago, is a drum 'n' bass album which took the young Bristol-based musician four years to make. It was, said the judges, "the DJ as artist and composer — this is drum 'n' bass as the new jazz".

In a break with tradition, the judges selected two classical albums, but no jazz or folk recording. In previous years there has been one classical album, attracting suggestions of tokenism. The two classical albums are Syvati by John Tavener, who was shortlisted in 1992 for The Protecting Veil, and Mark-Anthony Turnage's Your Rockaby. Syvati is a collaboration with the cellist Steven Isserlis, while Your Rockaby was described by the judges as "a masterful saxophone concerto".

The winners will be announced at a ceremony in London on August 28.

Cool contenders

Artist: The Prodigy
Title: The Fat of the Land
The Review: "Completely, absolutely, gobsmackingly dazzling. This is Mozart at the wheel of a monster truck."
Odds: 2/1

Artist: Radiohead
Title: OK Computer
The Review: "Surprising and sometimes inspiring ... its intensity makes for a demanding listen."
Odds: 3/1

Artist: Spice Girls
Title: Spice
The Review: "A high-kicking, boy-dissing bacchanal ... it's unbelievably slick and calibrated to sell millions."
Odds: 3/1

Artist: Suede
Title: Coming Up
The Review: "Another fine record ... they deserve permanent prominence in the English rock pantheon."
Odds: 6/1

Artist: The Chemical Brothers
Title: Dig Your Own Hole
The Review: "What an album ... innovative, ambitious and scoring countless hits on the pleasure centres."
Odds: 7/1

Artist: Primal Scream
Title: Vanishing Point
The Review: "An extraordinary record ... it is dark, edgy, paranoid, intense, musically exhilarating."
Odds: 8/1

Synod ends with clarion call for taxes to help create jobs

Martin Wainwright

FREED from the shadow of the gay clergy issue which has dogged its agenda this year, the Church of England wound up its general synod yesterday with a clarion call on unemployment, with delegates overwhelmingly backing a call by the Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt Rev David Sheppard, for higher taxes to improve essential services by creating jobs.

The synod also approved a demand for a minimum wage and tax changes to make it easier for firms to take on staff.

Calling unemployment a "national tragedy which is offensive to God", the bishop warned that schools reform would be wasted if pupils had no work to go to.

Rival wings of the synod, who had been divided on the gay clergy issue which came to a head in a debate on Monday, settled their differences to back the motion and an appeal to employers who sit in many parish church pews.

"Job creation in the private sector depends on the decisions of employers," said Bishop Sheppard.

"We hope that increasingly they will take pride in expanding employment rather than cutting jobs to save costs. The Government could reinforce that powerfully by shifting the structure of taxes so it is less costly to employ people."

Synod members, who voted 282 to two for the employment package, heard in the debate that the official jobless figure of some 2 million should be read with statistics which almost doubled the total.

Bishop Sheppard added that decently paid and useful work was essential to give people the sense of self-worth which prevented them from straying into crime or despair.

He said: "If the whole Church really cared, we might change the climate of opinion.

"Politicians at the last election were nervous of promoting policies leading to tax increases. It is a proper task for the Church to try to change the public's mind."

Year reprieve for security firms

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

LEGISLATION to implement a government crackdown on private security "cowboys and villains" will not be introduced for at least a year while talks are held with the industry, ministers have decided.

The Home Secretary, Jack Straw, yesterday renewed Labour's four-year-old promise to introduce legal controls, including compulsory licensing, to curb the private security "rogues and cheats" in an industry which employs 170,000 staff — more than the police.

Mr Straw said yesterday the unregulated system was "wide open to abuse", adding that it was "an extraordinary irony that an industry which attempts to regulate the behaviour of others is subject to no regulation itself. The result is that cheats and villains are able to operate."

He also told the British Security Industry Association annual lunch he was considering new controls on unscrupulous private wheelclampers and nightclub bouncers.

But ministerial sources said yesterday that legislation will not be introduced until next year. "We must not introduce any unnecessary red tape. We won't rush into regulation. Instead we will examine afresh the whole of the private security industry to see what problems exist and how regulation might solve them," said Mr Straw.

Measures under consideration include a licensing system for security guards, with penalties for firms employing staff with criminal records.

But among issues yet to be thrashed out is whether private security guards should be exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, so they have to disclose all their previous criminal convictions to potential employers.

A 1995 Commons select committee found that guards were charged with 2,600 crimes a year, and that some of the 8,000 companies involved were little more than fronts for protection rackets.

The police and leading security companies welcomed Mr Straw's plans, with Securicor Security Services' chief executive, David Cowden, saying: "We look forward to working with the Home Office to ensure the introduction of effective regulation sooner rather than later."

Cases for concern

□ A ROUTINE police inquiry disclosed that a private guarding company was employing an individual using a false name. It turned out that not only had he escaped from prison, but was a convicted murderer. The company had employed the man without any background checks.

□ Police investigating a theft suspected a private security guard and conducted a full check on all 26 employees at his company. Eleven were found to have previous convictions for a total of 74 crimes including rape, threats to kill, illegally possessing guns, burglary and assault. The firm's directors were not aware of their staff's criminal backgrounds.

□ The managing director of one company gave a reference to support an employee's application for a shotgun certificate. The director said he had known the man for a year, he had a "sociable nature and a good and even temperament", and was an "honest and very reliable person who can be trusted." Police inquiries showed he had 15 convictions for dishonesty and violence, and one for the manslaughter of his wife while attempting to carry out an illegal abortion.

□ A man with previous convictions for theft, deception and stealing cars was released from prison after serving time for driving while disqualified. He then set up his own security company installing intruder alarms, security lighting and CCTV.

□ A private security guard working at a court was found stealing money from a judge's handbag in his own Chambers.

Andrews 'inspired by real road rage case'

Vivek Chaudhary

TRACIE ANDREWS was involved in a road rage incident on which she later based a story that her fiancé Lee Harvey was stabbed to death after becoming embroiled in a motoring dispute, a court heard yesterday.

David Crigman, QC, prosecuting, cross-examining Andrews at Birmingham crown court yesterday, claimed she became involved in a fierce dispute with another driver after crashing into his car.

Mr Crigman said to Andrews, who was in the witness box for a second day: "You had an ugly incident with another driver, where there was the threat of real violence. That's what happened and you drew on that experience and adapted it".

Andrews admitted that the incident took place but denied it was the basis of a story about the murder.

Andrews, aged 28, of Alvechurch, Worcestershire, denies murdering Mr Harvey last December 1. The prosecution claims she stabbed him 30 times during a row as they returned home from a pub, and then invented a story that he was killed in an alleged road rage incident.

After the attack, Mr Crigman suggested, Andrews turned off the headlights of Mr Harvey's car, which came to a stop by a cottage along a quiet country lane leading to the couple's home. She was buying "thinking time in the darkness" after the killing, Mr Crigman said.

It was also suggested that Andrews failed to raise the alarm after the attack by sounding the horn or screaming, or making any attempt to alert the occupants of the cottage.

Mr Crigman said to Andrews: "You were thinking in that road, thinking what you could do, now that your temper had gone beyond anything you had contemplated.

"You knew he was dead, because if you thought he was alive, you would have gone to the door [of the cottage]."

Andrews replied: "Lee was lying in the road. I didn't want to leave him. I can't explain why I didn't go to the house or sound the horn. I was in shock myself."

Mr Crigman: "Why didn't you sound the alarm?"

Andrews: "I don't know. It's easy to say why didn't you do this or that. I don't know why."

Mr Crigman: "There were no shouts from you from beginning to end for help. No screaming. No running. No call for help."

Andrews: "I can't explain the way I acted, what I did."

Andrews was also asked to explain why splashes of Mr Harvey's blood were found at the back of his car after it had come to a stop. She had told the court previously that he was attacked at the front of his car by the passenger of the Ford Sierra.

Mr Crigman claimed Andrews attacked Mr Harvey at the rear of the car, moments after the couple got out as they argued.

Earlier, Andrews was asked to explain why she was covered in extensive amounts of Mr Harvey's blood, particularly from his arteries.

Mr Crigman: "You attacked him, didn't you?"

Andrews: "No I did not. I have already said this."

Mr Crigman: "Is it not your evidence that you only realised he was bleeding after the alleged second car had gone?"

Andrews replied that it was.

Crigman: "Then when could you have got blood that came out in a gush like a fountain from his carotid artery on your jumper?"

Andrews: "I cannot answer that. I do not know."

Mr Crigman told the defendant that the truth was she had been covered in arterial blood as she had been within "one arm's length" of Mr Harvey as she stabbed him.

Andrews denied it, saying she was covered in her fiancé's blood as she had been kneeling down by his side cuddling him.

The case continues.

هكذا من الاصل

One of six Romanian water buffalo imported to Salisbury Plain by the army comes face to face with a soldier. The animals have been moved from Warwickshire to a training area to keep down scrub on the plain and encourage the growth of heathland plants and marshy wildlife habitats able to support birds and dragonflies PHOTOGRAPH: STEVE PORTER

Family 'was failed' over double killing

Inquiry reveals communication breakdown between agencies

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

A FAMILY, left devastated after a mentally ill man killed his mother and then himself, was offered no support by health or social services authorities responsible for his care.

An inquiry report on the treatment and care of the man, Gilbert Kopernik-Steckel, said yesterday that family members had not even received a note of condolence. They had found out about the inquiry only a year later — from the inquiry team itself.

The report paints a picture of "overwhelming failure" of communication among the agencies concerned in Croydon, south London.

The police did not inform Mr Kopernik-Steckel's own doctors about the tragedy until the next day. The duty social worker found out only after visiting the family home 18 hours after the event.

Health and social services officials told the inquiry the police had wrongly told them the family had left the area immediately following the incident and was not contactable.

An independent witness, who is not named, said in evidence: "There is no professional, mutual respect between the various bodies involved."

On the inquiry team's recommendation, the chief executives of the health and social services authorities, together with the responsible assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, are to meet to sort out their differences.

Jeffrey Greenwell, former chief executive of Northamptonshire county council, who led the inquiry, said change had to start at the top. Without it, people could have no confidence that the muddle could not happen again.

It was indefensible that the family had been left feeling abandoned after the incident, he said.

Mr Kopernik-Steckel, a 33-year-old Cambridge graduate and architect, had suddenly become unstable while visiting the family in Croydon at Christmas 1995. His only known previous treatment for mental disorder had been in 1980.

Over 48 hours, he was twice admitted voluntarily to a psychiatric ward at the Mayday University Hospital, Thornton Heath, but each time discharged himself and returned to the family home.

On the second occasion, he told a friend whom he telephoned that he had "got to finish it". In the presence of his two sisters, he took a kitchen knife, chased his mother from the house, killed her and then killed himself.

The inquiry found failings by doctors, nurses and social workers. Papers needed to detain Mr Kopernik-Steckel failed to reach the right person and medical notes stating he should be stopped if he tried to leave the ward were not read by nurses.

When the inquiry team visited the ward earlier this year, it found "relatively little evidence that things have improved".

The agencies involved accepted all the recommendations. David Wechsler, chief executive of Croydon council, apologised for the lack of support offered the family.

News in brief

Blast at dry cleaners leaves nine injured

NINE people were injured, three seriously, in an explosion at a dry cleaners in Cheadle, Staffordshire, yesterday. One man was rescued by fire crews from the blazing Steventon's Dry Cleaners, which is also a launderette.

Casualties were taken to North Staffordshire Royal Infirmary, Stoke-on-Trent, where three are said to have suffered serious burns and smoke inhalation. More than 30 firefighters battled for almost two hours to bring the fire under control.

New hopes for murder inquiry

THE parents of the murdered schoolgirl Caroline Dickinson were last night hoping the Government's new commitment to press French authorities to review the stalled hunt for her killer would prove a watershed in the case.

Caroline, aged 13, was raped and murdered on July 18 last year in a youth hostel in Pleine Fougères, Brittany. French police have not found the killer. Her parents were "heartened" yesterday after meeting the Foreign Office minister, Baroness Symons, who vowed to write to the French government to press for a review of the investigation.

Paper fined for contempt

THE News of the World was fined £50,000 yesterday for contempt of court after an article on how a £100 million counterfeit racket was smashed caused a trial to be abandoned.

A story, "We smash £100 million fake cash ring", appeared the day after police arrested two men in September 1994 and charged them in connection with counterfeit English, US and Spanish money. Yesterday Lord Justice Pill, sitting with Mr Justice Astill, said the article had "beyond doubt" constituted a contempt of court because it had led to the trial of Tony Yetter Hassan and Anthony John Caldoiri being stayed.

Dispute costs £280,000

A NEIGHBOURS' dispute over a garden wall which will cost a few hundred pounds to replace was finally settled in the Court of Appeal yesterday at a cost to the legal aid fund of around £280,000.

Donald and Audrey Perrin, a retired couple, spent their life's savings of £80,000 on legal costs and surveyors' bills after they were accused by their neighbours of carrying out work on their bungalow and undermining the boundary wall. They were granted legal aid last week when their savings ran out so they could be represented at a hearing before three senior judges who yesterday dismissed their neighbours' action.

Body parts sculptor charged

A TUTOR at the Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture has been accused of stealing human body parts for use in his sculpture exhibits, Scotland Yard said yesterday.

Anthony-Noel Kelly, aged 41, is charged with theft of parts from bodies which had been donated to the Royal College of Surgeons for medical research, from June 1991 to November 1994. Kelly, and Niel Lindsay, aged 24, will appear before Horseferry Road court in London on August 15.

Travellers' tea breaks

MILLIONS of Britons take teabags and sausages on foreign holidays, according to a survey for the credit card company Visa. Rather than face croissants and coffee, Britons have a fry-up. Sixty per cent of travellers take teabags, 40 per cent of Geordies take sausages and bacon, and a third of Yorkshire people tomato and brown sauce. One in three Midlanders cannot enjoy breakfast without baked beans. — *Emily Sheffield*

Broken bowl, pagan dawn

Maev Kennedy Heritage Correspondent

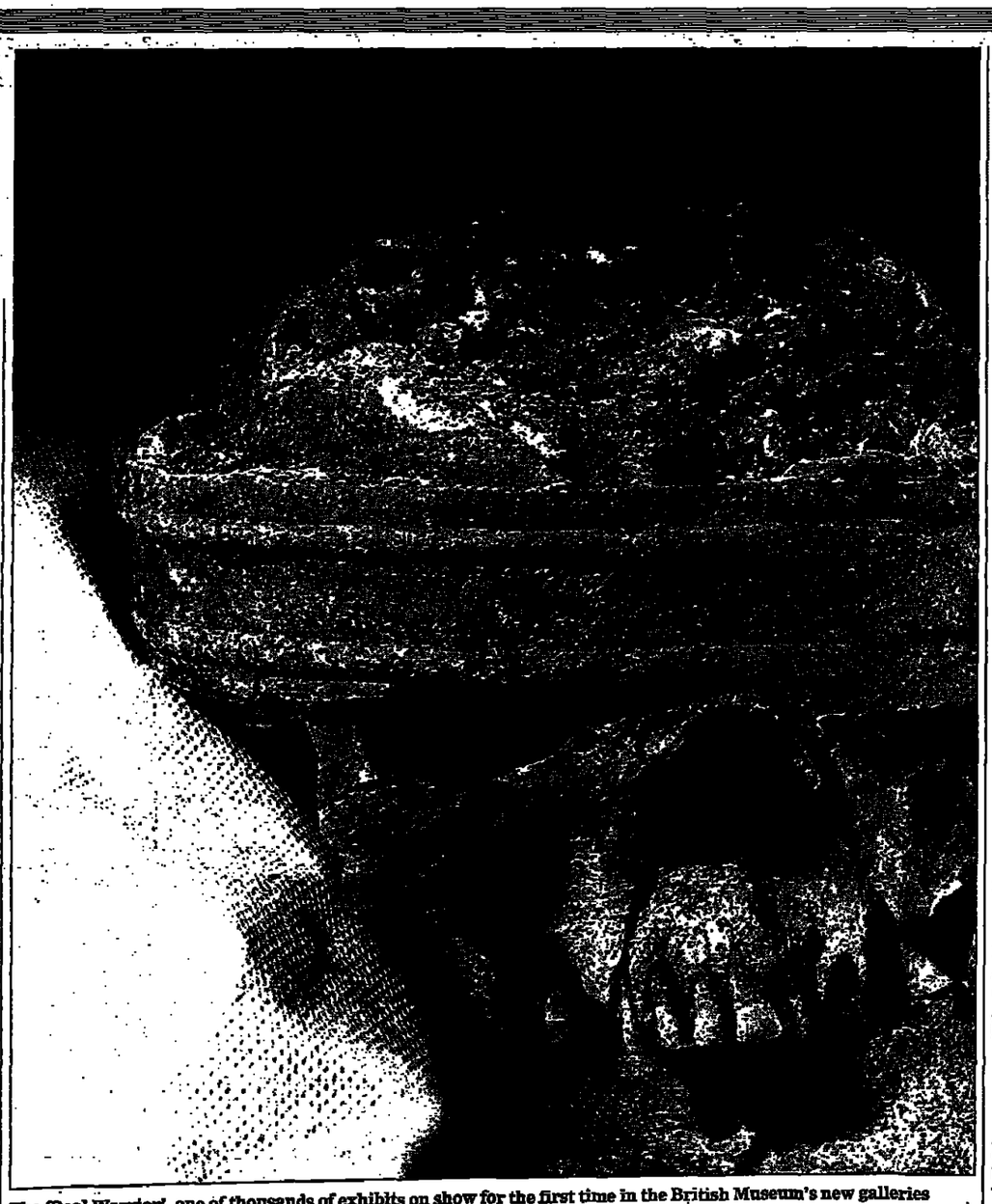
THE head of the magnificent new galleries at the British Museum was too modest to steer the Prince of Wales towards his favourite exhibit, a broken bowl labelled in a slightly wobbly hand.

The bowl was excavated in 1959 by an 11-year-old schoolboy, now Dr Timothy Potter, Keeper of Prehistoric and Roman-British Antiquities. It is among thousands of objects never seen before by the public since the old galleries were bombed in the war.

The Deal Warrior, excavated in Kent with his bronze crown still tipped rakishly over one eye, comes out of store to gaze unnervingly on visitors when the galleries open to the public tomorrow.

Yesterday Dr Potter's colleagues were debating whether to show the prince their apparition. Light from a skylight catches a 4th century silver tray engraved with Apollo, found at Corbridge in Northumberland. When the sun blazes, Apollo and his hand maidens are reflected back up to the roof, apparently blazing in mid-air. "It signifies the rise of a new pagan dawn," said Dr Ian Kinnes, probably joking.

The galleries also display humble objects from Roman Britain: an almost complete window pane from a bathhouse in Sussex, an iron frying pan and the only complete Roman spade ever found, made from one piece of ash.



The 'Deal Warrior', one of thousands of exhibits on show for the first time in the British Museum's new galleries

Computers 'cause social conversation to come unstuck'

Chris Mihill Medical Correspondent

THE growth of computer technology and the increasingly impersonal world of modern business is fuelling a huge rise in shyness, a psychologist warned yesterday.

The number of people in various countries assessing themselves as shy has increased by 20 per cent over the past 20 years and is now reaching epidemic proportions, said Philip Zimbardo.

He told a conference on shyness organised by the British Psychological Society in Cardiff that the "social glue" of casual conversation was being eroded by computers.

He said shyness levels in students had risen from an average of 40 per cent to around 60 per cent since 1977. The only exception was in Israel where rates were falling.

Professor Zimbardo, of Stanford University, California, said the disappearance of jobs such as bank tellers and shop assistants meant less opportunity for small talk, so people now felt they needed a serious reason to start a conversation.

The growing use of E-mail meant face-to-face conversations at work were becoming a rarity, and a relentless drive for efficiency was being translated into the home where parents used mobile phones and laptops to do yet more work.

He said some parents spent just six to eight minutes a day talking to their children. Fear of crime meant children rarely played together in the street, and so had less opportunity to learn to deal with people.

"By the year 2000 it may be possible to go through the day without talking to another person directly. We are sending information but not conveying emotion. For every hour we spend on E-mail we should spend an hour talking to someone."

> 'Computer games hypnotise kids and videos are used as babysitters'

He added: "Computer games hypnotise kids and videos are used as baby sitters. People are spending less time on personal hobbies, on vacation, or with friends or relatives. We are cheating on our social lives and the business mentality is seeping down to corrupt our lives in very fundamental ways."

Professor Zimbardo said it was a myth that shyness was a harmless stage of adolescence that people generally grew out. Rather it was a "silent prison" causing great pain and suffering. Shy people tended to get less glamorous jobs, receive less pay because they never asked for rises, and had poorer sex lives.

He said extreme shyness could lead to suicide or even murder. In a group of 10 killers he had studied in California, eight could be classed as shy. They had put up with difficult situations for years until they snapped. One man killed his girlfriend after a row because it was easier than talking through the problem.

Other researchers argued that the Internet could be a tool for overcoming shyness by reducing stress of personal interaction.

Lynne Roberts, of Curtin University of Technology in Perth, Australia, interviewed 100 Internet users and found many were shy or awkward. However, on line they became more outgoing — characteristics which later transferred into their real lives.

"People identify themselves as shy in their off-line lives but said they were less inhibited on line. The important thing was that some said it had improved their social skills so that they were less shy in their real lives."

Key win by transsexuals

Clare Dyer Legal Correspondent

TRANSSEXUALS have won a landmark ruling giving them protection against discrimination for the first time under English law.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal has held that the Sex Discrimination Act, which makes discrimination on grounds of sex unlawful, also protects transsexuals from unfair treatment because of their sex change.

The test case judgment, delivered a fortnight ago but only made public yesterday, means employers cannot treat a transsexual less favourably than other employees. It is now unlawful to sack an employee for undergoing a sex change, to refuse to hire a transsexual on that ground alone, or to fail to prevent their harassment.

The tribunal made the ruling in the case of a rides technician, named only as C, at an unnamed amusement park who was ostracised by colleagues after changing sex and was dismissed in July 1994 on grounds of incapability.

The judgment means that the Equal Opportunities Commission's brief to enforce the Sex Discrimination Act will now extend to transsexuals. Compensation has still to be decided.

In April 1996 the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg ruled that transsexuals were protected from discrimination under European Community law.

This gave public but not private sector employees the right to bring discrimination claims against their employers in British courts and tribunals.

C took her case to an industrial tribunal which held that she was covered under EC law and the Sex Discrimination Act.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal upheld the ruling, giving transsexuals rights against discrimination.

Diana seeks to dampen the furore over announcement about her future

Sarah Boseley

DIANA, Princess of Wales, yesterday tried to dampen down the excitement caused by her remarks to journalists covering her holiday in the south of France by issuing a statement denying an announcement about her future was imminent.

The princess, who had sped out in a launch wearing her bathing costume to a boat containing British reporters, claimed she had intended only to ask them when they would be leaving, as their presence was upsetting her children.

But much was made yesterday morning of her reported comment that they should expect "a big surprise with the next thing I do".

The princess's holiday has caused controversy from the moment it was known that her host in St Tropez was Mohamed Al Fayed, owner of Harrods.

In the reported exchange between the princess and the reporters, who kept their boat alongside hers, she is alleged to have said: "You'll see. You are going to get a big surprise with the next thing I do."

She said her sons were "always urging me to live abroad and to be less in the public eye", leading to speculation that she might emigrate. She rebutted criticism of her for accepting the hospitality of Mr Al Fayed, whose cash-for-questions revelations helped bring down the last government. "Mr Al Fayed was my father's best friend," she said. "I have known him for 10 years. Strictly speaking, I am on holiday with his wife."

She complained of the obsessive interest in her and her children, particularly by the French paparazzi.

G2 Front

Madrid forges plan to halt separatist bloodshed

Defiant ETA names its next victim

Alex Duval Smith in Pamplona

SPANISH government moves to build on an unprecedented outcry against Basque separatist violence and introduce new anti-terrorist laws met with a defiant response from ETA guerrillas yesterday, as they named their next victim.

Herri Batasuna, ETA's political wing, would not confirm a death threat against a Basque village councillor who belongs to the Partido Popular, the party of the conservative prime minister, José María Aznar.

But after a national cross-party coalition, the Madrid Pact, said it will consider tough laws to limit ETA bloodshed, Herri Batasuna issued a communique condemning "the strategy of lynching and the hunt for militants or sympathisers".

The statement, after three days in which millions attended peace rallies across Spain, warned that the "strategy (would) not solve the problem and instead risks a dangerous aggravation of it."

Yesterday's warning and graffiti threatening José Luis Casco, a PP councillor from Renteria in the Basque Country, deflated Spanish and Basque hopes of a rapid end to ETA violence, which has claimed 10 lives this year.

Some observers said the death threat against Mr Casco is further proof of ETA's increasingly fringe presence in

Spanish papers say José Ramon Carasatorre is chief suspect in the ETA killing

the Basque Country. Like Miguel Angel Blanco Garrido, the 29-year-old PP councillor from Ermua, near San Sebastian, whose execution inspired the peace rallies of the last few days, Mr Casco is an unpaid, part-time politician.

Herri Batasuna, which Mr Aznar has accused of being an accomplice to Blanco Garrido's murder, has 25 mayors and councillors in most of the Basque Country's 251 town halls. It has two MPs in Madrid and is represented in regional government. But the party looks increasingly divided and its base has been eroded in recent years by the advances of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), which denounces violence.

Yesterday, the party's newspaper, Egin, published letters condemning Blanco Garrido's murder, and against the party's advice two trade unions close to Herri Batasuna observed a one-day strike to mark his funeral.

But others warned that even though ETA is shrinking and its only consistent demand is for its 500 convicted supporters to be allowed to serve their sentences in Basque prisons, the group's death throes will be bloody.

Despite the national consensus for peace, backed by King Juan Carlos, nine people have been injured in the last three days in sporadic clashes in the Basque country.

Monday night's finale to the San Fermin bullfighting carnival in Pamplona ended with an exchange of Molotov cocktails between Herri Batasuna supporters and teenagers who staged an impromptu candlelight vigil for Blanco Garrido.

In San Sebastian, some 1,000 people hurled eggs and rocks at offices and a bar used by the party's supporters. In Bilbao, in the early hours, Herri Batasuna's offices were burnt at the end of a demonstration by the Basque peace group, Gesto por la Paz (Gesture for Peace).

Mr Aznar has received support from all parties except Herri Batasuna for his call to end contacts with ETA. But it is unclear whether the Madrid Pact's proposed legal moves, which include quicker court cases for terrorist suspects and a new law banning "menacing behaviour" will succeed in stamping out separatist violence.

A Kenyan policeman kicks a disabled street boy in the face during a second day of clashes in the capital Nairobi. Students chanted demands for political reforms and the departure of the president, Daniel arap Moi, and built barricades across a main road through the city. They tried to force their way back on to their polytechnic campus, held by riot police since it was closed on Monday after hours of clashes with thousands of students PHOTOGRAPH: ALEXANDER JOE

Second city hails sheikh

Lucy Hannan in Mombasa

A SMALL but rapturous welcome greeted the leader of the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK), Sheikh Khalef Balala, on his return from exile to his home town, Mombasa.

Young men and veiled women carrying anti-government banners met him at the airport on Monday night before piling into trucks and buses to accompany him.

His return coincides with the targeting of Mombasa in the drive for constitutional reform. Opposition politician Richard Leakey said yesterday that the port would be the next focus of reformers' efforts ahead of this year's election.

Heading straight for the Saqina mosque, the diminutive, fiery street preacher immediately stepped back into controversy by calling on people to burn their electoral registration cards outside the mosque on Friday. Offering to pay 10 Kenyan shillings (10p) a card, he claims thousands of cards will be burned every Friday until the government agrees to reforms. Similar tactics by his unregistered party led to clashes between Muslims and the security forces in 1992.

His previous attempts to return from Germany met with violent resistance from the security forces until the government agreed to give him a temporary passport.

He has allied himself with Kenyan opposition leaders also advocating disruption of the election process. Opposition MP James Orengo joined him in the mosque to call for the removal of President Daniel arap Moi. Activists are using churches and mosques to circumvent laws prohibiting opposition rallies.

IPK members followed him into the streets yesterday with leaflets calling for a national general strike.

The Muslim community — estimated to be about one-third of the population — is poorly represented in President arap Moi's Kanu government, with only 27 Muslims in a parliament of 200.

Although Mombasa is perceived by the government as an opposition centre, only three of coastal province's 19 MPs are from the opposition. As in other provinces, non-Kanu politicians have been restricted to urban areas by repressive laws.

Cosmonaut's heart worry further delays Mir repairs

James Meek in Moscow

ATTEMPTS to repair the crippled Mir space station were in disarray last night as Russia considered asking British-born astronaut Michael Foale to take over a dangerous repair mission from the Russian Vasily Tsibliyev.

Russian officials yesterday postponed the vital work, due to have taken place at the weekend, after doctors warned that Mr Tsibliyev was suffering from minor heart trouble.

The original plan was for Mr Tsibliyev, the mission commander, to carry out the repairs with fellow cosmonaut Alexander Lazutkin while Mr Foale sat in Mir's escape capsule.

But yesterday Russian medical experts studying feedback from routine tests on Mr Tsibliyev's heart found an anomaly and recommended he take it easy for the next few days.

The mission controller, Vladimir Solovyov, said a back-up solution involving Mr Foale carrying out the unprecedented work was being discussed. "I am sure that as a courageous man he would be ready to do it."

He added that Russian ground controllers will not ask Mr Foale to switch unless Nasa gives permission. If he is chosen, he will need about ten days of training.

In a statement Nasa, apparently concerned about the pressure on Mir's three-man crew, said it would discuss with the Russians whether the repairs could be delayed until the arrival of a fresh crew next month.

The new crew and its understudies have been practising the repair job on an underwater replica.

> 'For crying out loud! This is bad timing,' said Mr Tsibliyev

Mir, in space for 11 years, has been operating on reduced power since a near-fatal crash in June when an unmanned cargo craft slammed into one of the station's modules, leaving a one-inch hole and cutting off power from the module's solar panels.

Whoever carries out the repairs must work their way inside the airless module and feed power cables from the panels back into the rest of the station through a hatch.

A Nasa spokesman, Philip Engelauf, said yesterday that Mr Foale could replace Mr Tsibliyev. "If it is necessary we can do this," he said.

Mr Tsibliyev, an experienced cosmonaut with a previous 198-day stint on Mir to his credit, has been under enormous pressure following the crash, for which the Russian media blamed him.

There were signs of tension on Monday as journalists listened in to radio exchanges between Mr Tsibliyev and Russian ground controllers.

"For crying out loud! This is bad timing," said Mr Tsibliyev, referring to his symptoms.

"You have to calm down!" a doctor told him repeatedly.

The deputy mission controller, Victor Blagov, has said of Mr Tsibliyev: "We've been hearing his complaints of the workload being too heavy since the very first day of his flight. Maybe it's just personal and he can't work as fast as we urge him to."

Ground controllers have told him to begin sharing as much of his spacewalking experience with Mr Foale as possible without putting pressure on him to accept the repair mission.

Lada polishes image as Slavic Mercedes

Once synonymous with a bumpy ride, Russia's favourite car has gone de luxe, **James Meek** in Moscow writes

ONLY THE best deserve the best. The gruelling life of executive decision-making demands a rich reward. Like the reassuring power of 16-valve multiple fuel injection, the comfort of a leather and natural wood interior, the convenience of a back-seat fridge and bar.

Essentials which say only one thing to discerning lovers of quality motoring: Lada.

Undaunted by the collapse of their British market and debts to the Russian government of almost £300 million, engineers at the Lada factory in Togliatti on the Volga have unveiled the prototype of their first luxury car.

Apart from the 16-valve engine and the back-seat fridge, the new Lada model — called the Consul — differs in a few other respects from the cars the world has come to know and, not entirely fairly, laugh at.

It is fitted with an air conditioner, a television set, a video recorder, a CD-player and, just so customers understand this really is a Lada limo, an electric sliding-glass partition between passenger and chauffeur.

Engineers in the development department of the AvtoVAZ plant declined to say how much the Consul would cost, but it is bound to be many times as much as the latest Lada model now trickling into Moscow showrooms with a sticker price of a little over £6,000.

The carmakers told the Interfax news agency yesterday that the luxury Lada would be aimed at Russian businessmen.

Yevgeny Aksakalyan, of the Russian motoring paper Klaxon, said he doubted whether there was enough domestic demand to justify tooling up assembly lines for a Slavic Mercedes.

"If they could produce a small number of them to order, why not? You'd find people willing to buy them," Mr Aksakalyan said. "But it's too early to flood Russia with them when on average people are only earning $300 (£188) a month."

Yet in keeping with efforts by Russia's government to wean unpatriotic state officials away from their beloved BMWs and Audis, other Russian carmakers are trying to restyle their clunky old designs to meet reluctant bureaucratic demand.

The makers of Volga saloons are fitting Rover engines. A special de luxe stretch edition of the despised Moskvich — grandly called the Prince Yuri Dolgoruky after the founder of the Russian capital — has been issued for executives of the Moscow mayor's office.

Russians are ambivalent about the Lada. Given the money, most would prefer an imported car: among the rich, huge four-wheel drive vehicles from Chevrolet and Toyota — with smoked glass windows — are in fashion.

But there is a certain pride in the toughness of the local contender. On Russia's abysmal roads, millions of Ladas perform feats every day at which the average British four-wheel driver would blanch.

Flash points

- ☐ 16-valve electronic fuel injection engine
- ☐ Velvet, natural wood and leather interior
- ☐ Fridge
- ☐ Bar
- ☐ TV and VCR
- ☐ Sliding glass partition

Europe to allow drug firms to patent genes

John Palmer in Strasbourg

A TWO-year battle between the pharmaceutical industry and groups alarmed at the ethical implications of patenting genes will reach its climax today when the European Parliament approves a European Union directive on the issue.

The Life Patent Directive will allow pharmaceutical and agricultural firms to step up genetic research on plants and animals — a growth industry in Europe and the United States.

In spite of a heated debate in the European Parliament in Strasbourg yesterday, the outcome in favour of gene patenting was put beyond doubt when the centre-right and socialist parties — which hold an overall majority — declared their support for the draft directive.

But during the debate yesterday, MEPs across the political spectrum expressed concern at the possible abuse of biotechnical research.

"This directive is not in the interests of the public and is being pushed through thanks to massive pressure from industry," Nuala Ahern, an Irish Green MEP said. "If a single company is allowed to dominate this area it will kill genuine research and push Europe towards an American system of health care."

Opponents of the directive pointed to a campaign by European religious leaders to highlight "the disturbing ethical, social, environmental and political issues" of genetic engineering.

"If you give a patent on a gene you create a monopoly. Companies will be interested in 'conquering' as many genes as they can. This is really madness," a Greek Christian Democrat, Antonios Trakatellis, said.

Some MEPs who had voted against gene patenting two years ago, now said the time had come for action to protect inventors and companies financing research.

Bryan Cassidy, a Conservative MEP, said: "European industry is in danger of falling behind the biotechology industry in the US. If biotechnological research does not take place here, it will take place somewhere else."

Some MEPs confessed to being torn on the issue. "I wonder what can be said to parents whose child suffers from cystic fibrosis and they see hope in biotechnological developments. But there is a real danger of parents using genetic research to specify the features of their offspring," Ian White, the Labour MEP for Bristol, said.

Commissioner Mario Monti said the Commission would accept 64 separate amendments put forward by MEPs to strengthen proposed safeguards covering human and animal health and the environment. Mr Monti also reminded MEPs that the EU had outlawed genetic research for human cloning.

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Mystery bogey exorcised at last

Jon Henley in Helsinki

SUMMER colds do not come much heavier than Goran Rudolfsson's. For four weeks the retired teacher had snuffled and sneezed his way around the town of Hoverberg on Sweden's west coast with sinuses blocked and head buzzing.

Until one day last week, when he spent half an hour pulling a yard-long strip of wadding out of his head.

"I was getting desperate," a relieved Mr Rudolfsson said yesterday. "It was miserable. It wasn't normal; I'd tried nasal sprays and decongestants and everything. Then on Friday I was blowing my nose again, and I felt something move."

An exploratory finger up the left nostril revealed the cause of the trouble.

"I thought, well, that's a bit odd," he said. "I tugged, and some came out. I tugged more, and some more came out.

"So I went to the bathroom, and tugged and tugged, and it took about 30 minutes but eventually it all came out. Amazing, really."

The wadding — 31 inches long and an inch wide — turned out to have been left in Mr Rudolfsson's head by an absent-minded brain surgeon during a tumour operation he underwent in June.

An embarrassed spokeswoman at Umeaa University Hospital, where the operation had taken place, said such oversights were rare.

"Fortunately no harm seems to have been done," she said. "We have apologised to Mr Rudolfsson and thanked him for returning the cloth to us. He had washed and ironed it."

The senior surgeon, Goran Algers, told Lanstidningen newspaper that the incident was "clearly unacceptable, by any standards".

But Mr Rudolfsson was delighted: "The operation was successful, and I could sort the other problem out myself. You can't really blame the doctors — it was only a small mistake. They could have lopped off the wrong leg, or an ear."

Presidential fury over Hollywood frame up

Ed Vulliamy in Washington

CONTACT, the latest American UFO blockbuster movie starring Jodie Foster, has invoked the wrath of one the film's other star-players — President Bill Clinton.

Mr Clinton plays an unwilling part, as a result of a trick by Robert Zemeckis, the master of film collage who made Forrest Gump, in which Tom Hanks was placed beside real-life, but deceased, figures such as Richard Nixon and Mao Zedong.

But Zemeckis has pushed his wizardry a shot too far for the White House. He has President Clinton reacting to a question by Jodie at a press conference in the wake of a landing by, and direct contact with, space aliens.

In real life, Mr Clinton's words were recorded earlier this year and pertained to the discovery of possible life-forms on Mars. In the movie, the altered speech, has him talking about a close encounter of the third kind: "If this discovery is true, it will be one of the most stirring insights into our universe that science has ever uncovered."

In another sequence, Mr Clinton reassures nervous Americans about an unexplained explosion, caused by aliens. In reality, his words concerned events in Iraq.

The clips invoked a stiff rebuke from White House counsel Charles Ruff, who wrote to Zemeckis and the movie's producer, Warner Brothers, saying the montage was "fundamentally unfair".

> Clinton reassures nervous citizens after an explosion caused by aliens

Warner was accused of using the President "for commercial purposes" — a remark which caused some mirth, coming as it does in the middle of hearings on Capitol Hill into irregular business backing for the president's election campaign.

The president's spokesman, Mike McCurry, insisted on CNN television yesterday that Mr Ruff's letter did not run counter to the First Amendment. "There is a difference between freedom of expression when it comes to satire, and the president's image, which is his alone," he said. In the film, "he is saying something he didn't really say".

Officials said there would be no legal action against Warner or the director.

Zemeckis, on holiday, was unavailable for comment yesterday, but a twist to the story came when it emerged that the consultant to the movie, and source of the idea that Mr Clinton play a role, was Dee Dee Myers, Mr McCurry's ousted predecessor.

Ms Myers said yesterday that she had alerted the White House to the president's role in the film several weeks ago "as a courtesy", and that "Zemeckis believed correctly that he was on safe legal ground . . . I certainly was not uncomfortable with the way they used the president's image. It's clear that it's fiction."

More than 50 years ago, Franklin D. Roosevelt intervened to prevent a newsreel clip appearing in Elmer the Great. The then press secretary, Stephen Early, said the move had been made out of "concern for the protection of the dignity of the office".

هكذا من الأصل

هكذا من الاصل

Peace hope in Aegean

Helena Smith in Athens analyses a ground-breaking non-aggression pact between Greece and Turkey

FOR THE first time in years Greece and Turkey have put substance before rhetoric, signing an historic non-aggression pact that could pave the way to a new era between the two Nato rivals.

Almost 19 months after the neighbours nearly went to war over an uninhabited islet in the Aegean, their leaders have agreed to try to normalise bilateral ties by putting their names to a US-brokered six-point plan.

International observers say it took less than an hour for the Greek prime minister, Costas Simitis, and Turkey's President Suleyman Demirel to endorse the deal at a meeting held on the fringes of last week's Nato summit in Madrid. Few were briefed and few were invited. In Athens and Ankara the news caught even political insiders offguard.

But many hope the sudden accord will help end a cold war which is increasingly seen as the last obstacle to peace in Europe.

Greece and Turkey have already fought each other twice this century. Soaring tensions between them since the collapse of communism have made Nato's south-eastern flank ever more volatile.

The failure to reach a settlement on Cyprus, where 23 years after the Turkish invasion both have armies still facing one another, has exacerbated the friction.

"It will be a rough road but the road towards peace, towards a strong Greece, is always tough," said Mr Simitis, a technocrat par excellence, after convincing his socialist cabinet to back the accord.

The pact is based on the premise that both countries will avoid violence — and the threat of it — in dealing with their many disputes.

The two leaders also agreed to respect each other's "vital legal interests" in the Aegean Sea, where Greece and Turkey have frequently wrangled over territorial and mineral rights. Turkey had threatened Greece with war if it moved to extend its waters from six to 12 miles in the oil-rich sea.

After last year's near clash over a rocky outcrop known to the Greeks as Imia and the Turks as Kardak, conflicting claims over a number of islets have helped raise tension. For the first time ever Turkey has disputed Greek sovereignty over islands stretching as far south as Gavdos, below Crete.

Mr Demirel and Mr Simitis said they would ensure their respective governments would in future avoid the kind of posturing that could provoke similar crises.

Ending decades of mutual hatred and suspicion will not be easy. In Greece, the first nation state to win independence from the Ottoman Turks in 1830, life under the former overlords is still recalled with vivid dread.

On an official level, at least, the agreement is being touted in Athens and Ankara as the first serious attempt to settle differences "sensibly".

Officials say hopes for rapprochement have not been as high since 1933 when Greece's statesman Eleftherios Venizelos signed a friendship treaty with Kemal Ataturk, modern Turkey's founder.

Washington has already hinted that the spirit of detente will expedite a solution to the long-festering Cyprus problem. The island has been divided along ethnic and religious lines since 1974 when Turkey invaded after a short-lived coup aimed at uniting Cyprus with Greece.

A second round of US-sponsored talks between the island's Greek and Turkish leaders — who met last week in New York for the first time in three years — has been scheduled for next month.

Richard Holbrooke, the architect of peace in Bosnia who became the US envoy to Cyprus last month, says a settlement will work only if there is wider reconciliation between Ankara and Athens.

Under Mr Simitis's moderate leadership the Greek government is keen for a solution so that Cyprus can began EU accession talks without worrying about the oft-mooted prospect of Ankara annexing its breakaway Turkish republic.

In the meantime, Athens is waxing lyrical about the potential financial rewards to be reaped from the agreement. If Greece begins to talk real politics with Turkey, many believe it will only be a matter of time before the neighbours begin to do real — and profitable — business.

News in brief

Book tries to shame Burma's regime

EXILED Burmese dissidents have released a book of letters written by the chairman of Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party to Rangoon's ruling generals in protest at abuses and urging reform.

Letters to a Dictator contains 33 letters written by Aung Shwe between December 1995 and March 1997. The letters, which were never answered, were smuggled out of Burma and published by a Thailand-based dissidents' group.

The group said it released the book to ensure a public record of human rights violations committed by Burma's ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council. — *Reuter, Bangkok.*

Bomb targets OSCE

A BOMB exploded yesterday outside the flat of a monitor belonging to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe in Bosnian Serb-controlled territory, the second night in a row that OSCE has apparently been targeted, officials said.

The blast caused no injuries and shattered the windows of an apartment building in the north-western town of Banja Luka, the OSCE mission reported in Sarajevo.

Hostility is running high in Bosnia's Serb sector towards international monitors after a swoop by British Nato troops last week on two Serbs indicted for war crimes.

On Sunday, a bomb destroyed an OSCE pickup truck in Zvornik. No one was injured. — *Reuter, Sarajevo.*

Ferry toll rises

TWO more bodies have been found in a scenic lake in Indonesia's North Sumatra province where an overloaded ferry sank on Sunday night, pushing the death toll to 77, the official Antara news agency reported yesterday.

The agency said earlier that as many as 100 people could have died in the accident on lake Toba when the ferry capsized on its way from Parapat to Tomok on the island of Samosir, which is in the middle of the lake.

Rescue officials said more than 150 people were believed to have been on the wooden ferry, which had a maximum legal capacity of between 50 and 60 people, said Antara. — *Reuter, Jakarta.*

Call for resistance

A LEADER of Cambodia's embattled opposition arrived on the Thai-Cambodian border yesterday and rallied resistance to strongman Hun Sen nine days after he had ousted the first prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

Hun Sen's long-time foe, Sam Rainsy, a former finance minister and an ally of Prince Ranariddh, arrived at the Thai border and said he had returned from Europe to help followers who fled after the prince was overthrown on July 6.

Meanwhile, in the capital Phnom Penh, Toan Chay, a senior FUNCINPEC member who broke with Prince Ranariddh in April, said yesterday that he was confident of becoming the prince's replacement as first prime minister. — *Reuter, Phnom Penh.*

Leader comment, page 8

Aids deaths fall

DEATHS from Aids in the United States over a nine-month period last year fell 19 per cent over the same period in 1995, federal health officials have reported.

Two faces of Palestine

Anger on streets of Hebron

Julian Borger in Hebron

THE political problems of the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, are the policing nightmares of Colonel Tariq Zaid. The Palestinian police chief in Hebron must try to emulate his leader's tightrope act between open conflict and capitulation on streets where the stones and bullets fly both ways.

In May Col Zaid pulled his policemen out of the firing line between Hebron's angry young men and a fortified Jewish settlement in the heart of the town. He was ordered out by the Palestinian Authority, partly in retaliation for the Israeli government's refusal to halt the building of new Jewish settlements elsewhere.

He obeyed with relief: "I had 26 men wounded in March and April," he said, accusing Jewish settlers of opening fire on and stoning Palestinian policemen.

Now, however, he has been ordered to move his men back in again, to patrol the divided town's faultline and prevent disaffected Palestinian teenagers from approaching to within stone-throwing distance of the town.

For the last two days blue-uniformed Palestinians not Israeli soldiers have manned the concrete blockade between the communities. The soldiers have withdrawn to the relative safety of the Jewish compound, 50 yards away.

Colonel Zaid bristles at any suggestion that he is doing the Israeli army's work for it. "I have stopped the problems in the Old City to protect my own people from Israeli fire," he said yesterday.

On Shallalah (waterfall) street, the shopkeepers agree with him. They were open for business yesterday after having been forcibly closed for four days by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF). "This is good. It means we can work again normally. It was going too far," said Ahmed, who owns a shoeshop.

But in the eyes of Hebron's unemployed, it is clear that Col Zaid risks becoming the focus of resentment in place of the Israeli soldiers and settlers. Small bands of teenagers gather at the concrete barriers left by the Israelis and watch the policemen with sullen resignation.

"The Israelis want to create a bad situation between the people and the police. This is not a solution," said Abdul Nasser from the Arroup refugee camp.

The redeployment of the Palestinian police was agreed with the IDF at the weekend. In return the Israelis undertook to allow the shops to reopen, to protect the Palestinians from the Jewish settlers — which they have done — and to remove the concrete curtain dividing Hebron, which they have yet to do.

Daoud Kuttab, a prominent Palestinian journalist, says Hebron encapsulates Yasser Arafat's dilemma. He argues that if the Palestinian leader suppresses demonstrations, his authority takes the brunt of discontent, and the Israeli government is able to expand Jewish settlements in Palestinian areas with virtual impunity. If they get out of hand, the IDF threatens to reimpose direct military rule, ending an 18-month experiment in Palestinian autonomy.

"I think there is a point where the cycle of violence becomes so heavy that it endangers the accomplishments already made by the Palestinians ... They don't want to burn the bridges," he said.

While calm has been restored to Hebron for the time being, the settlements are still visibly expanding. The embryo of a new Jewish settlement has taken shape in the past few days in the hills outside Hebron, where soldier-farmers have cordoned off some land with barbed wire and pitched tents.

At Abu Ghneim, the hill south-east of Jerusalem known in Hebrew as Har Homa, work on a bigger Jewish settlment is still under way. The start of construction work four months ago caused riots across the West Bank and brought peace talks to a halt.

Tentative discussions have reopened in recent days on issues such as opening an airport and a seaport in Gaza, but yesterday bulldozers were at work on the hillside.

The Palestinians say such expansion is illegitimate under the 1993 Oslo Accords. The Israelis argue that nowhere in the accords are Jewish settlements ruled out.

An Arab boy shakes hands with a Palestinian policeman waiting in Hebron yesterday to take preventative action against stone-throwing Palestinian youths PHOTOGRAPH: RULA HALAWANI

Rhetoric from Arafat on the diplomatic stage

John Gittings

Yasser Arafat, the president of the Palestinian Authority, called on the European Union yesterday to exert economic pressure on Israel to force it back to the negotiating table.

Speaking at Chatham House in London, he warned that the alternative to negotiations was a return to violence by Israeli and Palestinian extremists.

"The [Palestinians] are not angry, but furious," he said. "They ask me: 'Is this the peace we voted for in the election?'... Patience has its limits. This is the best platform for fanaticism on both sides."

Mr Arafat noted that the Israeli ecomony relied heavily on links with Europe. "They are ignoring your representations," he said. "[But] if you wave this economic card, they will listen."

After Mr Arafat's meeting with Tony Blair on Monday, British diplomats said the EU, given its importance to the Middle East, should play a greater role.

Mr Arafat's remarks were delivered with a controlled passion suggesting his anger at the Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, and despair at the failure of the talks. But he resumed a more familiar style of rhetoric when he sidestepped a question about corruption, suggesting the Palestinian Authority was too poor to be tainted.

"Corruption means money," he said. "Where is the money?" Mr Arafat claimed that the Israeli closure of its borders with Palestinian areas was costing $7.9 million (£4.9 million) a day — three times as much as the sum brought in by external aid and donations.

Mounting poverty raised the risk of extremism, he added. "We have arrived at the red line of starvation in some places, especially in the Gaza Strip."

He said Mr Netanyahu was seeking to implement his pledge in last year's Israeli election to wreck the peace process, and was even rejecting United States mediation.

He claimed that recent trilateral security talks had been broken off "because [Israel doesn't] want the participation of the US".

Mr Arafat's case relies on commitments made by US negotiators at various stages of the peace process, although Israel has disputed their interpretation. "We are not asking for the moon; we are asking for what has been signed in the White House to be implemented accurately and honestly," he said.

He quoted a letter of guarantee signed at the 1991 Madrid conference by the then US secretary of state James Baker. The letter, he said, pledged there would be "no demographic change in Palestinian territories during the transition period, including East Jerusalem".

Israeli spokesmen deny ever having made a commitment to refrain from expanding Jewish settlements in the West Bank or building new houses in East Jerusalem.

Mr Arafat also relies on a "note of record" from the Hebron agreement in January this year which he says commits Israel to continue further redeployment of its troops out of the West Bank.

The actual document only refers to the first phase which was carried out in March, although a letter from the then US secretary of state, Warren Christopher, sets out a timetable for the next two stages.

Mr Arafat contrasted Mr Netanyahu's attitude with that of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin — whom he described as his partner. Many problems were settled by telephone with Mr Rabin, he said, or with the foreign minister Shimon Peres.

Arafat: a return to violence is the alternative to talks

Web report suggests promotion for Kim Jr

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong reports on a hi-tech hint of impending change in North Korea's dusty corridors of power

THE arcane art of North Korea-watching leapt into cyberspace yesterday as computer screens flashed hints from the starving Stalinist state of a promotion for Kim Jong-il, the former dear leader turned great leader upon his father's death in 1994.

The regime's World Wide Web home page broke a lengthy news blackout on the political fortunes of Kim Jr and suggested he had secured the posts of president and party chief.

Mr Kim is thought to have been running the country since the death of his father but had done so without assuming his titles.

Mr Kim's elevation to the country's two highest posts will be formally confirmed, according to Japanese reports, on September 9, North Korea's national day, and October 10, the anniversary of the founding of the ruling Korea Workers' Party, respectively.

This long-awaited sign of movement in Pyongyang's glacial power play follows the end last Tuesday of a three-year mourning period for the founder of a self-proclaimed "paradise on earth", where the economy has shrunk for seven years in a row and 24 million people now survive on one-fifth of the minimum food requirement.

The North Korean website, launched in January with fanfare and help from Japan but only sporadically updated, yesterday quoted the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) as referring to Kim Jr as "president and secretary". He is usually known as supreme commander or great leader, an honorific he inherited from his father.

"This is significant and may be preparing the ground for people to see him in his new role," said Michael Breen, a North Korea watcher. But he urged caution: "Look to see if they repeat these titles in future reports. Or whether they take out the programmer and have him shot."

Oddly, versions of KCNA reports received by BBC monitoring via South Korea refer to Mr Kim as great leader, as is customary. "It could be a slip. Or it could be very important," said one analyst.

Signs of an end to North Korea's political logjam coincide with attempts by Washington to coax Pyongyang away from what a senior defector says is preparation for war. Many question the testimony of Hwang Jang-yop, North Korea's former chief ideologue, but it has unnerved American defence planners, who will soon submit a secret report to the defence secretary, William Cohen. The US has 35,000 troops in South Korea.

The US on Monday doubled food aid to North Korea and announced a visit to Pyongyang next week by two senior figures — the former US senator Sam Nunn, who chaired the Senate armed services committee, and a retired ambassador to Seoul, James Laney. The US, North and South Korea and China are due to meet in New York on August 5 to discuss formal negotiations on a peace treaty to replace the armistice agreement that ended the 1950-53 Korean war.

> Kim is expected to remove the tainted members of his father's generation

Once confirmed as party secretary, Mr Kim is expected to remove from positions of authority the last members of his father's generation, men tainted by the defection of Mr Hwang.

From his position at the centre of policy-making Mr Kim could engineer a shift away from his father's autarkic principles. Ideological absolutism has already begun to crack with the introduction of a border-free economic zone and small farmers' markets.

But there are some signs that Mr Kim wants to shore up the crumbling orthodoxy rather than risk any further tinkering. An editorial in the party newspaper this week hailed the Kims for having "categorically rejected the manoeuvring of big powers that arbitrarily interfered in the internal affairs of Korea and urged Korea to accept an 'integrated economy'." This is a swipe at China and Russia, former allies who have been urging Pyongyang to leaven its system of central planning with free markets.

The presidency is a largely ceremonial post but it should require Mr Kim to talk with foreign dignitaries. There is speculation that he cannot speak or has a serious speech impediment. His media statements are never delivered in person.

Algerians free rebel leader amid new violence

Reuter in Paris

ALGERIA'S radical Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) yesterday welcomed the release of its leader, Abassi Madani, by the country's authorities.

A statement from FIS headquarters said it was "a positive act by President Liamine Zeroual and a definite and effective contribution to solving the crisis and returning to peace and stability."

It said Madani, sentenced to 12 years imprisonment in 1992, was returning home. His release follows a flare-up of violence in remote villages and bombings in Algiers.

President Zeroual held talks with seven party leaders yesterday to discuss when local elections should take place this year, the official Algerian news agency APS said.

Secular opposition parties did not attend the meeting, and want more transparency in the poll to limit what they see as electoral fraud in last month'sgeneral election.

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Labour must go for PR

To drop it for the Euro election would be betrayal

TOMORROW the Cabinet decides whether to introduce proportional representation for elections to the European Parliament in June 1999. Perhaps, in relation to some of the mighty social issues facing the nation, tomorrow's decision may seem a bit marginal. But do not be deceived. This is a touchstone issue: first, because it will signal whether Labour in power is as open to democratic reform as it appeared in opposition; second, because after so many statements in favour of change the decision will put Labour's reputation for trustworthiness on the line.

The case for reform of the European electoral system rests on three arguments. The first is that proportional representation is the right system for the European Parliament. Not only is it intrinsically fairer than the existing first-past-the-post system (a point already recognised in the PR system in force for electing Northern Ireland's members). It is also more appropriate for a parliament which has a more deliberative relationship with the Commission and Council of Ministers than a national parliament has with an executive national government. It is the chosen system of all European nations other than Britain. In addition, given the size of the European electorate, traditional arguments in favour of the accountability of first-past-the-post are much less powerful.

Secondly, a change to proportional representation would be the keeping of a promise. As a nation, Britain is a signatory to the Treaty of Rome, which calls for the European Parliament to be elected by a uniform system. As a party, Labour has repeatedly advocated that this should mean proportional representation. That was the conclusion of the Plant Committee, endorsed by the party conference. It was repeated in the report of the Labour-Liberal Democrat joint consultative committee which concluded this year that European elections should be conducted on a proportional, regional-list basis. And it was included in Labour's general election manifesto, which stated "We have long supported a proportional voting system for election to the European Parliament".

The third argument is that it provides an opportunity for Tony Blair to reform and modernise the list of Labour MEPs. The Prime Minister owes many of his party's representatives at Strasbourg no favours at all. Massively out of touch with opinion within the Labour Party, and thriving on a political system which has virtually no effective accountability at all, some of them have used their privileged position simply to embarrass their leader. Proportional representation will in any case mean fewer Labour MEPs (in the 1994 elections, Labour took 74 per cent of the seats on 44 per cent of the votes), but Mr Blair would not be human if he did not see the wider advantages.

On all these grounds, therefore, the Cabinet should affirm its commitment to proportional representation. But it must also do more. There is still time for the new system to be introduced in time for the June 1999 elections. The core of the necessary legislation already exists, and Labour's brisk management of parliamentary business shows that a bill could clearly be passed in time to meet 1999's electoral timetable. Postponement of reform until the elections of 2004 would not just be unnecessary but also a betrayal of widespread expectations. It would be a spit in the eyes of Labour's own members, of the Liberal Democrats, of Britain's European partners and, above all, those who look to Labour for democratic reform. It would be a sign that Labour are just like the rest of them after all — and that is a sign that the Cabinet should give at its peril.

End game for the Khmer Rouge

Their place is a war crimes court not Cambodian elections

BY ANNOUNCING that Cambodian elections will be held in May next year, Prime Minister Hun Sen hopes to head off international disapproval at the virtual coup d'etat which has just been carried out. He may get away with it. This is partly because the outside world has little appetite for getting involved again in Cambodian politics. It is also because in the contest which has just been bloodily won, there seems little to choose between the two sides. The royalist Funcinpec party led by the — now ousted — co-prime minister Prince Ranariddh was nourished by Western support as an anti-communist rival to Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party. But Funcinpec is now split and Ranariddh is widely judged to have given Hun Sen the pretext he needed by flirting dangerously with the Khmer Rouge.

In moving against Ranariddh, Hun Sen claimed that he and his senior military commander were illegally importing Khmer Rouge units into Phnom Penh after they suffered a new split in their bases on the Thai border. (The fate of Pol Pot himself, reported last month to be under arrest, is still unconfirmed.) The G7's special envoy to Cambodia, Yukio Imagawa, supports the view that Ranariddh provoked the fighting by "sneaking about 140 Khmer Rouge fighters into Phnom Penh." Funcinpec's negotiations with the Khmer Rouge were supposed to be secret but the intention was clear: to establish a new coalition ahead of the elections.

Hun Sen has long since exhausted the residual credit to which he was entitled for having led the Vietnam-backed invasion which ousted the murderous Khmer Rouge 18 years ago. He insisted on a power-sharing arrangement after he was defeated in the UN-backed 1993 elections, and has since used selective terror to intimidate political opponents. One of these, former finance minister Sam Rainsy, is now announcing his support for Ranariddh from the safety of the Thai border. Last year Hun Sen took the credit for a previous surrender of Khmer Rouge forces from which Funcinpec had hoped to benefit. His self-aggrandising and threatening style is a further misfortune for Cambodians who have suffered so much already from autocratic leadership — whether it be displayed by princes or political commissars.

Apportioning historical blame will not help Cambodia now. But the West's willingness to condone the continued survival of the Khmer Rouge for so long, after it was expelled from Phnom Penh, as part of a bogus coalition government in exile — and to arm it covertly — now appears even more criminally obscene. Outside pressure on Hun Sen is needed now to seek to ensure that the elections do take place and are fair. But the UN and Cambodia's neighbours in ASEAN should join in insisting that the Khmer Rouge has no part in such arrangements, whoever invites them in. Their leaders belong in a war crimes court — and that is where Hun Sen, or Funcinpec, should deliver them.

Water at the end of the tunnel

Leakages are falling as companies respond to pressure

THE prodigal profiteers may have repented. None of the privatisation programmes of the last government was as unpopular as water. Even modest profits by the 29 new companies would have angered some people given the commodity they are selling falls free from the sky. But the excess profits of the companies — coupled with exorbitant price increases, excess pay rises and inefficient services — only made matters worse. An industry which raised its prices by 35 per cent in five years — and distributed £2,500 million in dividends in the same period — blatantly resisted public pressure to reduce leakages from its pipes. Indeed, leakage actually increased after privatisation as the companies concentrated on improving water quality. Then came their comeuppance: the driest two-year period in 200 years. An independent report commissioned by Yorkshire Water declared the fiasco in the industry — surging profits but evaporating water supplies — was "a crisis waiting to happen". Average wastage was 25 per cent but Thames was losing almost four out of every 10 gallons. Now each company is being set tough five-year targets which will require a progressive plugging of the holes. Thames, for example, has been told it must cut its leaks in half by the year 2000. Far from squealing, the company confidently declared yesterday it expected to meet its target. Better still, every company will offer consumers a free leakage and detection repair service. Two of the smaller firms are even offering free replacement of leaking household supply pipes. Fourteen companies are already introducing compensation schemes for drought-related supply interruptions and another eight have agreed in principle. The new environment secretary's threats look as though they have worked. Now all they need to do is cut their prices.

Letters to the Editor

Memo to Roy: on yer bike

WHILE there is no excuse for cyclists breaking the law, Roy Hattersley missed the point in his anti-cycling diatribe (My brush with the Cyclists of the Apocalypse, July 14).

Provision for cyclists in Britain is pitiful and one of the reasons we have a far lower level of cycle use than most of our continental neighbours. The royal parks in London have a particularly dismal record. The few cycle routes they do provide are poorly co-ordinated. The one alongside Constitution Hill that Roy mentions is invisible from the road and begins and ends nowhere anyone would want to be.

Cyclists have a right to be pious. They cut congestion, cut pollution and cut costs to the NHS by staying fit. And unlike cars, lorries, buses, taxis and Roy's dog, they are non-lethal.

Ben Bradshaw MP.
Secretary, Parliamentary Cycling Group.
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA.

DO people really pay $20,000 to listen to Paul Johnson speak (Letters, July 11)? Bad enough that we have to suffer the unchecked outbursts of this apologist for the brown-envelope brigade, but the idea that even an organisation as daft as the Moonies have descended to this kind of masochistic self-abuse makes the blood run cold.

Rollo Sheridan.
106 Boulton Grange,
Randlay, Telford TF3 2LF.

EDWIN Scott may be right in his description of some church services (Letters, July 14), but is he comparing like with like? Perhaps it ought to be King's College Chapel evensong with Oasis, rather than the ordinary parish service, which perhaps needs to be matched with the group at the local gig. Even so, every week since Edwin "cashed in his spiritual chips 50 years ago", the church show has been on the road pulling in about a million punters a week, many of whom will swear that the top of the bill is always there. Will Oasis achieve as much?

Roger Frost.
10 Elmbank Road,
Kenilworth,
Warwicks CV8 1AL.

THE proposed three-point assessment of teachers by Ofsted is crude and insulting to the teaching profession. The most likely effect will be the further discouragement of good candidates from entering teaching and good teachers from applying for headships.

Jean Northam.
Lilyvale, Huxham,
Exeter EX5 4EW.

YOU report (Priests serve no earthly employer, court rules, July 12) that "Dr [Alex] Coker ... was ousted from his home and post at St Philip's Church in Cheam, south-west London ... by the Bishop of Croydon without being given any reason." This is untrue. It is on record that Dr Coker signed a six-month agreement with the Vicar of St Philip's, Cheam, which terminated in May.

You also report that "that job [Dr Coker's curacy at St Luke's, Woodside] was terminated by the Bishop of Croydon in November 1993". Again, it is on record that the vicar properly sought my permission to give Dr Coker notice, and duly did so.

(Rt Rev Dr) Wilfred Wood.
Bishop of Croydon.
St Matthew's House,
100 George Street,
Croydon, Surrey CRO 1PE.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address

Young ones' right to a fag and a shag

JONATHAN Freedland deftly describes the dog's breakfast of age restrictions in UK legislation, but then draws the false conclusion that proposed changes to two of these restrictions, relating to smoking and gay sex, amount to a "bizarre anomaly" (Age of consent goes up in smoke, July 15). Both measures reflect compatible and distinct policy objectives: improved public health and removal of inequalities.

Raising the smoking age to 18 could be part of a much wider programme to reduce smoking, especially among young teenagers. There are no public health reasons to discriminate between gay and heterosexual consent — safe sex is advisable for both.

Finally, it is not yet government policy to raise the smoking age to 18 — and may never be. It was merely one of the proposals tabled at the Government's anti-smoking summit on Monday.

Clive Bates.
Director, Action on Smoking and Health,
16 Fitzhardinge Street,
London W1H 9PL.

NEVER mind Mr Freedland's preoccupation with 16- and 17-year-old rights to tobacco and sexual intercourse, I welcome his pointing out that this age bracket is subject to taxation without representation. However, the greatest anomaly of all is that 16- and 17-year-old workers seem to receive a lower wage from UK employers than their 18+ counterparts. Surely employers are effectively obliged by EC law to reward workers doing the same job equally.

Brendan Dawson.
47 Park Road,
Bushey,
Watford WD2 3EE.

THE Government is absolutely correct in not contesting the Euan Sutherland case in the European Court, discrimination being a dirtier word than homosexual. But why equalise at the age of 16? Is it to allow two more years for maturity before seeing an "adult" movie?

With legislation that allows young people to buy tobacco at 16 but not alcohol until 18; have intercourse at 16 but not get married until 17; drive a car at 17 but not vote until 18, the new parliament could do worse than tidy up this mess with a new "age of maturity" when all of these restrictions could be lifted. I vote for 17.

M C Barry.
10 Kilchattan Place,
Wemyss Bay,
Renfrewshire PA18 6DY.

YOUR Leader (July 15) omits to mention the important way our law discriminates against gay men in its restrictive definition of privacy. This is contrary to the Wolfenden Report and results from an amendment introduced into his own reform bill by an insufficiently determined Lord Arran under pressure from opponents who would have preferred to see no reform at all.

What is needed now is a comprehensive sexual law reform bill instead of the tinkering at the edges which has been half-promised.

Allan Horsfall.
91A Longcauseway,
Farnworth,
Bolton BL4 9BW.

IT was 40 years ago — not 30, as your Leader states — that the Wolfenden Report made a substantial case for setting the homosexual age of consent at 16 (although it recommended it solely out of political expediency, as Lord Wolfenden afterwards admitted).

Antony Grey.
Secretary, Homosexual Law Reform Society.
120 Melrose Avenue,
London NW2 4JX.

YOU provide a valuable service in publishing the age of consent for heterosexuals and homosexuals in Europe (Gays win sex at 16 battle, July 15). Protagonists of children's rights to sexually express themselves can now, for example, look to Spain where the age of consent is 12 and demand equal treatment. Just as the European Court judges demand parity between heterosexuality and homosexuality, they will surely demand that same parity between children living in different parts of Europe. The European Court must decide the age of consent across Europe.

Gerald Hartup.
The Freedom Association,
35 Westminster Bridge Road,
London SE1 7JB.

TO SUGGEST that the problem of smoking amongst the under-16s can be solved by increasing to 18 the age at which a person may be legally sold tobacco products is bizarre logic (Anti-smoking summit to discuss bans, July 14).

All this shifting of the goal posts will achieve is the appearance that there are even more "under-age" smokers than before.

The absurdity of current legislation is that it is *not* illegal for a person under 16 to purchase tobacco products. The crime arises from the shopkeeper responding to a request for cigarettes, accepting money and handing them over — even though it is the youngster that sets in motion the sequence of events that precipitates the crime.

Martin Ball.
Information Officer,
Forest (Freedom Organisation for the Right to Enjoy Smoking Tobacco).
2 Grosvenor Gardens,
London SW1W 0DH.

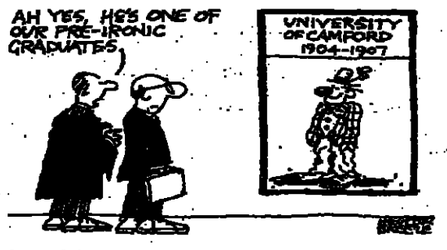
THERE'S a simple solution to the controversy about tobacco sponsorship of sport. Just slap a 50p a packet sports levy on cigarettes. The Grand Prix track at Silverstone could then be plastered with hoardings bearing the legend "sponsored by the anti-smoking levy". Any money left over could be used to run anti-smoking television advertisements.

Ben Tisdall.
115 Victoria Road,
London NW6 6TD.

Those Oxbridge comedians have the last laugh

MICHAEL Collins's attack on the new comedy establishment (You must be joking, Media, July 14) was, on the whole, spot on. How do one-joke acts like Gayle Tuesday, Jo Brand, Harry Hill, and even Harry Enfield and Vic n' Bob at their most repetitive, manage to convince commissioning editors that their "ironic/surreal" character slapstick is worth a show — never mind a whole series?

Yet Collins neglects the Talkback/HatTrick mafia (Angus Deayton, Paul Merton, Lee Hurst, Nick Hancock, et al) who have become the comedy cartel that both the BBC and Channel 4 simply can't refuse. We are witnessing a new breed of backslapping, you-appear-on-my show-I'll-appear-on-your-show Ronnies, Brucies and Tarbys for the post-modern, seen-it, done-it, took-it-to Edinburgh generation. These Footlights foot-soldiers feather each others' nests quite nicely.



It's no coincidence that the same old Oxbridge ponces continue to dominate British comedy and that fresh and predominantly regional talent is neglected in favour of formula comedy. The media can't see further than its own undergraduate cliques. BrassEye, the Mark Thomas Comedy Product and a quarter of the Fast Show apart, who is taking chances in British comedy? The talent is out there but the Grouchocentric media can't be arsed looking.

Phil Thornton.
Editor, The Guttersnipe.
43 Latham Avenue,
Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 5DT.

Higher stakes

KENO and video lottery terminals (Watchdog to oppose pub online bingo, July 12) are not extensions of the Lottery but separate forms of gambling, which give adults the chance to gamble *continuously* (rather than once or twice a week) for a large prize.

All research shows that where accessibility and stimulation of gambling increases, the number of problem gamblers increases. Gambling activities with small event frequencies (eg fruit machines, which have short time gaps between money gambled and result) tend to be more addictive than those with long time gaps (like the Lottery and football pools).

(Dr) Mark Griffiths.
Senior lecturer in Psychology,
Nottingham Trent University.
Burton Street,
Nottingham NG1 4BU.

How dirty old towns clean up

AS Margaret Drabble (The North's grim legacy, July 12) should know, Stoke-on-Trent has another name. It is also the Potteries, the only conurbation in Britain to be known by a dominant industry — so it doesn't need spoil tips to remind it of its industrial past.

In contrast to her throw-away dismissal of the city that liked its spoil tips, Stoke has an enviable record with the regeneration of industrial sites; between 1974 and 1988 the area of derelict land was halved. Though there may be a grim legacy of dereliction from land-hungry industries, there has also been an impressive record of reclamation — the national garden festival site (formerly part of a steelworks) and central forest park (formerly a colliery and clay pit) are two examples.

To suggest that the city didn't want its derelict land reclaimed or its spoil heaps landscaped is simply untrue.

Chris Thomas.
Division of Geography,
Staffordshire University,
Leek Road,
Stoke-on-Trent ST4 2DF.

MARGARET Drabble rightly reminds us how negatively our northern place-names affect our self-image, despite their often ancient origins. We should learn from this and avail ourselves of better fortune. For we cannot seriously hope to compete in the Europe of the regions with the allure of Provence, Galicia or Bohemia by adopting the dull and uninspiring monicker of "North-west England". North-east England can turn to old "Northumbria", so perhaps we should go back to the future too — as "Amounderness".

Richard Sharland.
Secretary,
Amounderness Society.
130 Golden Hill Lane,
Leyland PR5 1YA.

MARGARET Drabble regrets that you couldn't have a Wilkinson, Wragg or Drabble in a poem. She should count her blessings. I'm sick of Betjeman's friendly bombs falling on me.

Brian Slough.
95 Beatrice Road,
Kettering,
Northants NN16 9QS.

A Country Diary

CHILTERNS: Months of rain and then a week of sultry heat have produced prodigious plant growth along the waysides. Grasses have reared to chest height. Species, whose flowering times or niches are usually well apart, are blooming side by side. The last ashy remnants of bluebells are next to sheets of pink centaury. Field poppies sprout out of inch-deep puddles, next to the damp-loving fleabanes that normally grow there. There also seems to be a high incidence of slightly unusual colour varieties — maybe because of changes in soil chemistry from leaching. In a few hundred yards of roadside round Bellingdon I found a pale blue self-heal, a dark pink, almost wine-coloured yarrow, and a stand of rose-bay willow herb with pale petals suffused by a twilight blue (though I have still never chanced on that gardeners' grail, a pure white rose-bay).

The drifts of rose-bay are the stars of the roadside show at present. They sweep up against hedges still dotted with the last dog-roses, spill forward to the road's edge, form carmine lakes amongst the heavy, no-nonsense spears of hogweed. Together in the dusk, the vestigial purity of their white and pink flowers have an almost luminous quality. But dreams of summer profusion are disrupted slightly by some other, less seasonal growths. The warming of the water-logged ground has generated an abundance of precocious toadstools. Horse mushrooms, eerily hemispherical and symmetrical amongst all this teeming greenery, ambush the hogweed stalks. Troops of parasols lurk under the rose stems. Huge numbers of fairy-ring champignons, and other glutinous brown things I can't identify, are trying to push their caps above grass growing almost fast enough to see — things of dank and dark and of heat and light entwined together. Perhaps, in our increasingly overcooked climate, this is what our summer waysides are going to look like in future.

RICHARD MABEY

هكذا من الاصل

هكذا من الاصل

Diary

Matthew Norman

A DILEMMA grips the Navy. It concerns the badge for HMS Astute, the first of the new generation nuclear-powered "hunter-killer" submarines now being built in Barrow-in-Furness by Vickers. A previous Astute was decommissioned years ago and naval tradition dictates that a new vessel carries its ancestor's badge. The problem for the RN's Names and Badges Committee is that this one depicts a dead grouse in the jaws of a retriever. In the days when Fatty "Nicholas" Soames was armed forces minister, this would, of course, have been no problem, but some committee members are concerned that a blood sports motif is not the thing to endear the senior service to New Labour. MoD sources are aware of this, and say that great care must be taken "to convey the right image". Very sensible no doubt, but who would have thought that New Labour sensibilities would afflict the Royal Navy? It'll be focus groups to decide weapons systems next.

BY popular demand, The Quest For God by my sane and rational friend Paul Johnson becomes Diary Book of the Month for July. The book contains much wisdom from first page forward, but we will start at the back. There resides a section of prayers Paul composed to help as many of his readers as possible: first up tomorrow is "Prayer to be said by a Princess beset by troubles."

I AM baffled by the appearance, in the Mirror's Diana story, of the word "exclusive". As other papers reported, Diana talked to a yacht-full of reporters, but to read the Mirror you would assume she spoke privately with James Whitaker. "Diana interrupted her holiday with Mohammed Al Fayed," wrote the bibulous blob, "to give me the extraordinary interview." Editor Piers Morgan explains this apparent deception. "The only man she addressed by name was Mr Whitaker, so we rightly claim the word 'exclusive'," says Piers. "Mr Whitaker will be liberally rewarded for his fantastic world scoop." Richly deserved.

STANDARDS of political neutrality on the *Today programme* are in question after an incident involving Jim Naughtie. After a mini debate between scientists about that phenomenon whereby people can sense someone staring at their backs, the presenter added his twopenn'orth. "Well, last night I was in a London restaurant, and I felt a little prick in my neck," said Mr Naughtie. "And when I turned round, it was William Hague." Oops.

AT the Young Labour Conference in Bournemouth on Saturday, delegates were thrilled when TV producer Walid Ali launched a tough counterstrike against growing concern about New Labour's obsession with marketing techniques. While chairing a workshop, Mr Ali chose to compare New Labour with an advert for Nike — one in which "you hardly see the word Nike at all . . . New Labour should be just like that Nike ad." How fascinating. "We're selling a lifestyle, we're selling an image," Mr Ali went on, " . . . you know the 'ins and outs' columns of newspapers, where the Spice Girls are in? We want to keep New Labour in." Magnificent. The flame of Nye Bevan burns brightly yet.

JONATHAN Croall faxes from Twickenham to report receiving a letter from English Heritage yesterday. "Join our special break to the Royal Pageant of the Horse," wrote membership manager Peter Tyrrell. Would that be the same Royal Pageant which would have ended now, had it not been so famously cancelled? Apparently so. "In passing," writes Mr Croall, "I notice they have marked my membership renewal card (I have never belonged) as being for a senior citizen (I am 55) with my father's intials (he died 20 years and never belonged). Is Stonehenge safe in these people's hands?"

Time to make Greeks a gift of their Marbles

Commentary

Isabel Hilton

THEY were busy changing the signs in Chris Smith's kingdom this week: out with the fusty old Department of National Heritage, with its overtones of theme-park culture, polystyrene Norman Castles and Tudor mummery for tourists; in with the dynamic, forward-looking Department of Culture, Media and Sport, complete with an "inter-departmental Creative Industries Taskforce" stuffed with such fashionable cultural achievers as Richard Branson and Sir David Puttnam. Culture as ersatz heritage experience is dead, long live creative engagement. Let the sign painters proclaim the passing of the philistine age.

Chris Smith, our new cultural commissar, is an energetic and cultured man: he goes to the opera and listens all the way through. He's open-minded and well-informed — well aware, I would guess, of the prime place that culture enjoys in the political life of other modestly sized European social democracies. If he is trying to move culture from a political afterthought and accessory to the tourist industry to something more akin to the French ideal, then the best of luck to him in what may prove to be an uphill task. But if that is his ambition, then perhaps he can begin this new era with a change of heart.

Back in the bright new dawn of the Labour Government, when the nation was still creeping across the stage like the prisoners' chorus in Fidelio, blinking in the unaccustomed brightness of the day, a sudden, discordant note was struck. It wasn't very loud, but loud enough to jolt the harmony. It came from the freshly minted Minister of Culture: in Mr Smith's first policy disclosure, the minister declared that, contrary to widespread expectation and in defiance of what appears to be the majority opinion of the British public, the so-called Elgin Marbles would not be returning to Athens. They were, he said, an integral part of the British Museum's collection and it was not a "feasible or a sensible option" to send them back. It was a bit like saying that Hong Kong was an integral part of Britain's collection of colonies: true enough, in its way, but not, at this stage in history, quite the view you expect a Labour government to embrace.

The pronouncement caused consternation in Athens, but some dismay in this country, too. The rejoicing in Greece at the news of the Labour Government's landslide was founded on a promise made by the former labour leader, Neil Kinnock, 12 years ago. The Parthenon without its marble frieze, Mr Kinnock had said, was like a smile without a tooth. The Marbles, he pledged, would be returned as soon as the Labour Party gained power.

What changed their minds? It can hardly have been the fear of a backlash. Last June, in the wake of a Channel 4 poll which showed an overwhelming majority of the British people in favour of the return of the Marbles, more than 100 MPs signed an early day motion calling on the Conservative government to enter into immediate negotiations. In the European Parliament 250 MEPs, including more than 40 Labour members, supported a similar motion. If the polls are to be believed, they could even have achieved that rare thing in politics — doing well by doing good. No wonder the Greek Minister of Culture, Evangelos Venizelos, whose slightly precipitate enthusiasm had provoked Mr Smith's response, was stunned.

The arguments against return have grown steadily more threadbare over the years, though a number of myths have lodged themselves in the darker corners of the British consciousness. One is that the seventh Earl of Elgin somehow "rescued" the Marbles from the Parthenon, where passing barbarians would undoubtedly have destroyed them. In fact, Lord Elgin, who at the time was British ambassador to Constantinople, was on a personal shopping expedition, looking for useful bits of antiquity with which to decorate the country seat he was having built back home. His original intention was to copy them, but when that proved difficult and the opportunity arose to remove the originals, he seized it.

The poor Greeks, who were part of the Ottoman Empire at the time, had no say in the matter and the Turks cared less about the fact that a frieze the Greeks placed at the centre of their identity and culture was being hacked off and carted away than they did about securing British support against Napoleon.

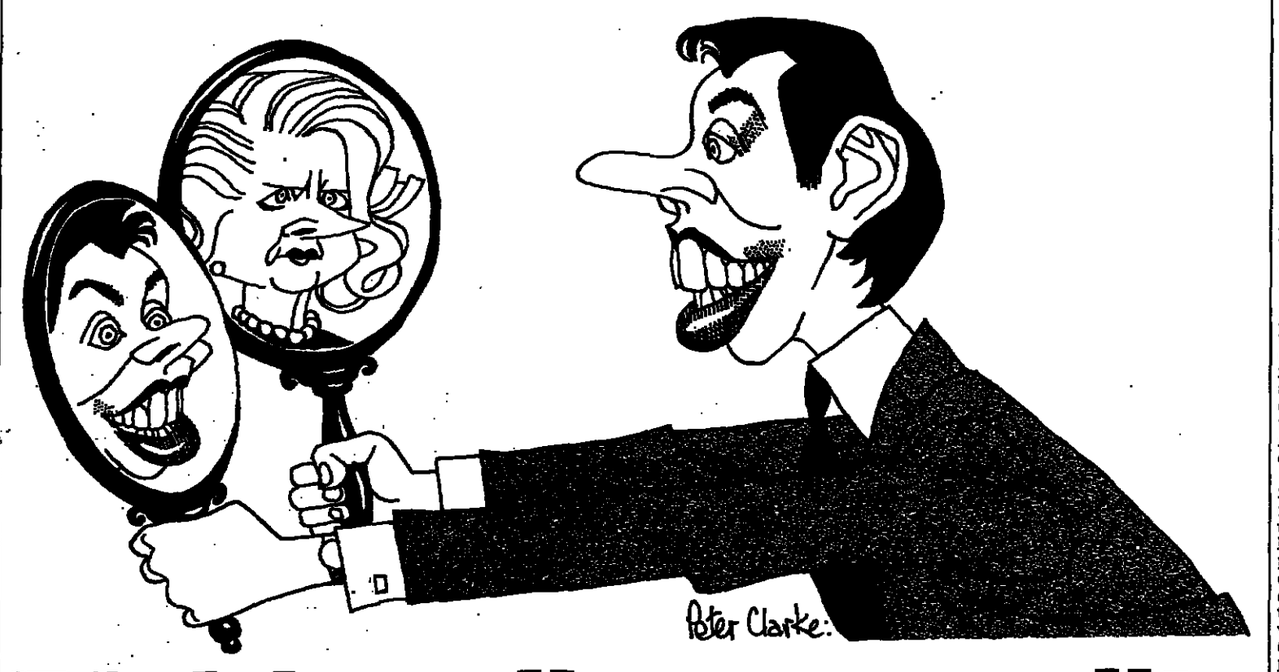
> The Parthenon without its marble frieze, Mr Kinnock had said, was like a smile without a tooth

It was only later — in 1816 — when his marriage had collapsed and he had lost both his diplomatic position and his seat in the Lords, that Lord Elgin sold them to the nation to recover some of his costs. Even at the time, some thought the whole episode a disgrace to a nation that prided itself on its lofty cultural values — the most famous of them being Lord Byron.

The Marbles have now been demanded many times by successive, democratically elected governments of Greece, which is a fellow member of Nato, the European Union and the Council of Europe. The notion that they are safer in London no longer stands; the barbarians are no more of a threat in Athens than in London and the Greek government, which has spent millions of pounds on the restoration and conservation of cultural objects, is currently building a special museum at the foot of the Acropolis to house the marbles. There they would be protected from the air pollution that serves as another part of the British case for retention.

It's an old argument, but surely one that we should now settle. British museums are, of course, stuffed with other nation's treasures, many acquired in circumstances that do not bear examination in the light of today's moral and cultural values. But the Elgin Marbles are unique not only in their ranking as one of the world's greatest cultural artefacts: they are at the heart of Greek cultural identity. As Professor John Boardman put it: "The story of the Parthenon . . . embraces the beginnings of organised religious life in Greece . . . the physical, political, economic, social and military history of Athens itself."

For generations, cultured Britons have studied ancient Greece as a prime source of the cultural mix we define as British. Such studies were thought to enrich both the cultural and the moral understanding. Now that we have a proper Minister of Culture in a Government that proclaims itself intent on joining the modern world, surely we can abandon the fustian pretence that the Parthenon Marbles play a more important cultural role in Bloomsbury than they did — and would again — in Greece.



Blair's split personality

Labour's Thatcherite economics clash with its political radicalism, argues **David Marquand**, who wants a return to social democratic values

AS THE wave of jubilation that greeted Tony Blair's Downing Street arrival begins to break, hard choices are looming. Notwithstanding the brilliance of Gordon Brown's first Budget, there is an unacknowledged tension between the conservatism of New Labour's economics and the radicalism of its politics. There are tensions within the social coalition that carried it to victory. I suspect that there are comparable tensions within the psyche of the luminous and enigmatic young man on whose untested shoulders the fate of the centre-left now rests. If he and his Government are to make the most of the opportunity he did so much to create, these tensions need closer examination than they have so far received.

The tension between economic conservatism and political radicalism is the easiest to define. Like the Owenite SDP in the 1980s, New Labour in the 1990s has accepted the central assumptions of the Thatcher counter-revolution in political economy: that is what makes New Labour new. The implications go deeper than is sometimes realised. The Thatcher counter-revolution was about free choice in the market-place, but it was also about authority in the firm. The entrepreneurial ideal of the early nineteenth century — the right of the owner-manager of the first industrial revolution to do what he would with his own — was repackaged to suit the needs of the modern corporation. As in industrial revolution Britain, the "wealth creators" had to be set free to create wealth. As in industrial revolution Britain, their freedom implied subordination for those they hired and fired. The decasualisation of labour — the central theme of a century and a half of working-class history — had to give way to its recasualisation. That was why "flexible labour markets" became the Thatcherite mantra.

In all this, New Labour's agenda does not differ much from the previous regime's. Despite their nods towards the Social Chapter and the minimum wage, today's Blairites, like yesterday's Thatcherites, evidently believe that Britain should seek competitive advantage in the global market-place through low non-wage labour costs, correspondingly low levels of social protection and deregulated labour markets. Unlike the Thatcherites, they know that the diminished British state can continue to play a significant part in world affairs only through close involvement in the European Union. But they cannot see that the only worthwhile rationale for the European Union in a post-Cold War world is to defend the European social model from destruction at the hands of rampant global capitalism. In the struggle between globalisation and the European model, the central theme of European politics today, their instincts are with the globalisers.

YET they are equally committed to empowerment in the polity. Here too the Thatcher counter-revolution deserves the credit. Old Labour was as committed to the doctrines and practices of Westminster absolutism as were the Conservatives. But in the Thatcher years Labour found itself on the receiving end of a ferocious centralism, far exceeding anything it had attempted itself. Its response was to embrace most of the constitutional agenda originally put forward by the SDP-Liberal Alliance, and later given a more radical twist by Charter 88. Now the Blair Government is committed to the most extensive programme of constitutional reform attempted in this century. And the point of the programme is to take power out of the hands of the élites of Westminster and Whitehall and put it into the hands of the people.

New Labour ministers presumably think that citizen empowerment can go hand in hand with continued worker disempowerment. If so they are amazingly naïve. The citizenship ideal is one of participation, activity and self-development and, by the same token, of accountability, transparency and scrutiny. Good citizens debate, argue and question; they don't simply accept what is handed out to them. And they cannot switch off their citizenship when they go to work. That is what the early social democrats meant by social democracy. A democracy confined to the political sphere, they insisted, was no democracy. It had to embrace the social sphere as well: citizenship was indivisible.

That core insight of the social-democratic tradition has lost none of its force. The demand for a Scottish Parliament, to mention only the most obvious example, has become irresistible because the Scots remained faithful to the ideal of social citizenship that the Thatcher governments wanted to uproot, and decided that only home rule could protect it from sassenach incursions. Come a Scottish Parliament, there will be an alternative power-centre in Great Britain, committed to a conception of social citizenship uncannily close to the European social model that the London Blairites disdain. If devolution leaks southwards, as it is likely to do sooner or later, similar power-centres can be expected to emerge in the North-east, the North-west and Yorkshire. This does not mean that New Labour's political vision is bound to trump its economic vision. It does mean that the party will sooner or later have to choose which vision to put first. It would be be wise to choose sooner rather than later.

That leads on to the tensions within the social coalition that delivered Tony Blair his victory. Its construction was a historic achievement — on a par with Mrs Thatcher's in the early-1980s, but with no left-of-centre precedent since the days of Asquith and Lloyd George. For the moment, at least, the Blair coalition includes virtually the whole of the professional class, large swathes of corporate-sector management, what is left of the old, organised, upper-working-class Labour interest that the party came into existence to serve, and most of the "new" Thatcherite working class that swung to the right in the late-1970s and early-1980s. It extends from John Prescott to Howard Davies, from Congress House to the CBI, from the pubs and clubs of Essex Man to the senior common rooms of Oxford and Cambridge.

The trouble is that the coalition is held together by antipathy to post-Thatcherite conservatism rather than by anything positive. The result is that, beneath the rhetoric of novelty and change, it is essentially conservative with a small "c" — economically and socially. Its motto is: "Thus far, and no further". Its members do not want — and certainly do not expect — to undo the Thatcher counter-revolution. Even those who might, in an ideal world, like to undo it know that they would lose their new-found allies if they tried. What they want is to call a halt to it: to enable the beneficiaries of early Thatcherism to digest their gains, while drawing a line in the sand against further upheavals. But such conservatism is unsustainable. In today's world, economic conservatism is an oxymoron. Economic conservatives accept the logic of the global market-place and take the shibboleths of free trade and free competition for granted. But that logic and those shibboleths entail relentless and disruptive changes in virtually every sphere of social life.

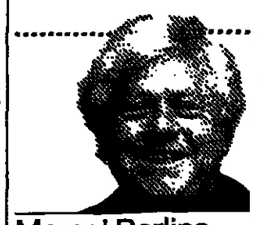
THE waves of personal insecurity and social dislocation from which the Blair coalition wants to be defended emanate from the global market-place. The result is that, on the central issue of our time, social democrats and social conservatives converge. Albeit for different reasons, both wish to protect the inherited memories and shared histories that make a flourishing civil society possible. And that cannot be done without jettisoning the accepted pieties of economic conservatism.

This in turn leads on to the putative tensions within the psyche of the Prime Minister. Plainly, he is a radical. As plainly, he is also a conservative. He is a child of the 1960s, who is also a child of the 1980s; a participative democrat who has imposed a Prussian discipline on his own party; the darling of the Sedgefield Labour Party who has managed to charm the Murdoch press.

So far, he has been lucky — deservedly, for his has been a case of fortune favouring the brave. Sooner or later, however, there will be a time of trouble. Only then will we find out what he and his Government are made of. Until then, the best service his friends can do him is to cheer on Blair the apostle of social-democratic citizenship and convince Blair the economic conservative of the error of his ways.

David Marquand is principal of Mansfield College, Oxford. A fuller version of this article will appear in the next issue of The Political Quarterly.

Why Bar's man called last orders on fees



Marcel Berlins

LORD Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, prepares his speeches with diligence and chooses his words carefully. So when, in a House of Lords debate on Monday, he used the term fat cats to describe the top income-earners at the bar, he knew exactly the effect the words would have on the outside world.

Fat cats is not a neutral term, describing high-earners generally — you do not read of fat-cat Phil Collins or fat-cat Ryan Giggs. It is used to suggest that the massive income is somehow undeserved and excessive, like the windfall earnings of the heads of some of our utilities. Those made us angry partly because they seemed to be at the expense of the consumer — if the fat cats get the money, our gas bills don't get lower.

At least the fattest of the legal cats can plead not guilty to taking money out of taxpayers' pockets. Almost all the barristers who earn a million, or even a mere half-million pounds, practice in the commercial, company, financial, planning and tax areas of law. Their paymasters are the multinationals, conglomerates, wealthy foreign interests and the top British companies. Not a whisper of any money taken directly from public funds.

Besides, not many QCs reach Lord Irvine's fat-cat bracket. Of nearly 9,000 barristers, a dozen or so have incomes of more than £1 million; perhaps another 100 reach £500,000. (His protegé Cherie Booth is probably only in the £250,000 range).

Why then did Lord Irvine specifically draw attention to the earnings of only a few dozen barristers working in narrow fields of the law who, anyway, do not get paid from our taxes? What have they got to do with saving public money, which is what concerns the Lord Chancellor?

Partly Lord Irvine was making the limited point, but relevant to Monday's debate, that it was not court fees but lawyers' fees that deterred people from going to the civil courts. He likened the increase in the court charges that he was pushing through with an increase in vehicle excise duty — it was not the price of the tax disc that stopped you buying a car, but the price of the car. But Lord Irvine could have made his point without mentioning the fat cats, without the pejorative tone of his remarks about lawyers' charges.

Here is a man who, on his own admission, had "an entirely satisfactory and rewarding practice" at the Bar (probably between £500,000 and £700,000); who apparently undergoes a Pauline conversion and turns on his former collaborators. More than that, he uses language, sound-bites and examples calculated to confirm the public's jaundiced view of the legal profession as grasping and greedy. He would not do all this merely for the sake of a relatively unimportant debate on court fees.

There is a broader agenda and Lord Irvine's speech on Monday was part of its preparation. The scandal of lawyers' fees is not, as Lord Irvine well knows, that a relatively few fat cats are earning huge sums from private sources, but that a far larger number of silks are earning unwarrantedly large amounts from public funds. QCs in civil cases on legal aid, particularly family cases, can earn £300,000 a year. The fees some of them have charged in individual cases have even provoked judges into outraged comment.

> QCs on legal aid in family cases can earn £300,000 a year — provoking judges into outraged comment

In one case, involving children alleged to have been abused, there were about half a dozen QCs, representing various interests, each of them charging £2,000 a day in court (it was, of course, a lengthy case) in addition to their "brief fees", for taking on the case, of up to £40,000.

The Lord Chancellor's speech on Monday should be seen as laying the foundations for a series of attacks on such fees, an integral part of his policy of no new money for the legal system. He is preparing the lawyers for the onslaught on them, but he is also making sure that he has the public on board. The occasional disparaging of the legal profession does no harm to enhance his image as a Lord Chancellor who is on our side and not the prisoner of his former colleagues.

When Lord Irvine was confirmed as Lord Chancellor, the top echelons of the bar were greatly relieved. No longer would they have to endure the machinations of Lord Mackay, the hostile outsider. Lord Irvine was definitely "one of us", an insider known for his enthusiasm for the bar, its customs — and its earnings. The irony is that this friendly Lord Chancellor is far more likely to dismantle the barristers' comforts than the enemy who preceded him.

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Gianni Versace

Show a girl a good time

GIANNI Versace, shot yesterday aged 50, was one of the 20th century's foremost fashion designers. Italy's king of glamour was an up-beat, if glitzy, foil to Giorgio Armani, its king of minimalism: Versace was the preferred designer of starlets and Oscar nominees.

It was Versace, after all, not Hugh Grant, who brought Liz Hurley fame after she spilled out of *that* dress at the premiere of *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. A Versace classic, a skintight sheath of black jersey held together only with oversized gold safety-pins; it could barely contain her voluptuous form. Versace, whose long-time muse was his chemical-blonde sex-bomb sister, Donatella, must have delighted in that. As did the world's media.

In the week after, the Sun dressed six female staff in quickly run-up copies and spread them across its centre pages. The Daily Express gave instructions on making your own and Versace was inundated with orders — never mind that the dress was an extravagant showpiece never destined to make the rails.

Versace understood, more than any other designer, the value of such hype and that the clothes themselves were only a very small part of his international business. Consider the long-time feud between himself and arch-rival Armani, always timed to perfection to explode in publicity at the opening of the Milan collections, dominating the headlines throughout the week. Or Versace's legendary ad campaigns, photographed by superstars Richard Avedon and Bruce Weber, and featuring everyone from Madonna to Elton John (who was snapped in womenswear, true to the house's iconoclastic, high-camp form).

There were the frantic faxes sent out by his press office listing who would be wearing "Mr Versace" in the run-up to the Oscars, or who would be present in the front row at his red-carpet shows in Milan, and after at the notoriously wild parties. Joan Collins, Ivana Trump, Bruce Springsteen, Eric Clapton and Prince are all Versace devotees. Versace designed matching wedding outfits for Sting and Trudi Styler, and a going-away outfit for Elizabeth Taylor Fortensky.

Only last Sunday, at his couture show at the covered-over swimming-pool of the Paris Ritz — long home to his twice-yearly event — the fashion pack was greeted by Michael Hutchence, performing "two new songs, live!" before even the very first high-sparkle, high-glamour frock made its entrance. "I like to dress egos," Versace once said. "If you haven't got an ego today, you can forget it."

Born in Reggio Calabria, in southern Italy, Versace cut his fashion teeth in his seamstress mother's atelier, beginning work for her at the age of 17. His father, Antonio, worked first as a coal merchant, eventually opening a shop selling electrical goods. For years, Versace never mentioned him. Some say that he was ashamed of his father because of his inauspicious heritage, others that they fell out badly, when, at 22, Gianni fled the nest, heading north for Milan. Whatever, in recent years, Antonio was no stranger to his son's notoriously extravagant palazzo in Milan's Via Gesù, regularly visiting there until his death in 1993.

Once in Milan, Versace worked for Arnaldo Girombelli, one of Italy's most formidable names, and owner of big-name labels Callaghan and Genny, before launching his own label in 1978. "Gianni Versace and Milan. Here and very now... A total extravagance,"

> 'I like to dress egos,' Versace once said. 'If you haven't got an ego today, you can forget it'

ran the Harper's Bazaar ad to announce his first-ever signature collection. It remains relevant to this day. He was quintessentially Italian in everything, from his overtly sexy designs to the way his elder brother Santo and sister Donatella helped run the business. And he was wildly extravagant; his designs shout status and wealth proudly from the rooftops. But perhaps his greatest talent was that, while retaining his rock-star-style signature, he continued, with every collection, to keep abreast of the times. He was always perfectly in line with the "here and now".

In recent years, Versace and his entourage lived between Milan, the Villa Fontanelle on Lake Como and his mansion in Miami — he discovered the fashion potential of the place long before others even dreamed of it. I was there last April, and as I drove past the house, was amazed to see it flanked by designer dustbins. Versace dustbins — sprayed bright gold, with their very own heads of Medusa, the Versace logo, stuck on their sides.

Anyone who has ever worn Versace will not only testify to the glamour of his designs, but also to the ever-considerate handling of his texture and silhouette. As well as the signature sharply-cut leather, due for a revival this autumn, the perfect spangle sheath dresses, the Technicolor chainmail that every season had fashion editors reaching for their sunglasses (Versace glasses, of course), his tailoring, recently pared down to an uncharacteristically demure minimum, is a joy to wear.

I will miss the flowers and hand-written messages sent to every single fashion editor, regardless of their status, season after season. The celebrity-spotting on the night of the show. Most of all, I'll miss the parties. No one knew how to show a girl a good time, sartorially or otherwise, better than Gianni Versace. That is the legacy that the ever-generous Versace would have liked to leave behind, most of all.

Susannah Frankel
Guardian Fashion Editor

Lisa Armstrong, fashion features director of Vogue, writes: Some designers are megalomaniacs, most are egomaniacs, but Versace was a rarity — a charming man who not only remembered journalists' names but those of their children, or cats, and never forgot to ask how they were.

You might say that he could afford to be nice: he lived like an emperor and surrounded himself with paid courtiers who kept the baying hordes away. But unlike many in the fashion world, he never seemed jaded. He loved making women look beautiful and was unashamedly star-struck — so unashamedly that it became rather endearing.

Casa Versace (or rather Casas Versace, for he had multiple sumptuous palazzos and town houses all over the world) were unbelievably lavish. It was said, not entirely in jest to judge by the place, that his flat in Milan contained as many antiquities as your average Italian museum. Those houses played host to more celebrities than an awards-fest. He was phenomenally generous and hospitable. Only once did he feel sufficiently riled to reprimand a guest — when the artist formerly known as a Squiggle did not get out of bed for seven days, after which Versace kindly asked him to leave. But if he was an over-awed fan, he was also shrewd — how many other designers get Madonna to star in their ads?

He once told me that he loved nothing more than settling down in the evenings with his gardening and art books — and though this snug domestic picture is slightly at odds with the hard-partying friend-to-the-rock-stars persona that he cultivated, it is true that getting the details right at home, down to the last tessellated marble fireplace, was as much a passion with him as designing clothes.

Watching the Versaces realise their grandiose decoration schemes became something of a spectator sport, particular with the latest residence on New York's Upper East Side where he decided that the newly completed and extravagant kitchen was in the wrong place and had it demolished the moment it was completed.

But if he loved possessions, he also loved his family, and like every Italian adored his mother). Although the *famiglia Versace* set-up was not exactly conventional — he was openly gay and lived a peripatetic lifestyle, closely shared with sister Donatella, her husband Paul Beck, and his brother Santo — there is no doubt that he was devoted to Donatella's two children, and the feeling was mutual.

His niece Allegra made her catwalk debut at six: no retiring wallflower, she rushed on during a finale, encouraged by models Christie Turlington and Linda Evangelista though much to her uncle's consternation. One way or another, the entire family was involved in the business. There was lots of fighting, and quite frequently a drama and angry silences, but they always made it up.

Donatella goaded him on. From the teen-age years when the brother and sister used to steal their father's car keys and roar off to the local disco together — Santo was the blue-eyed brother who stayed at home — to the headline-grabbing collections when she encouraged him to go shorter, brighter, sexier, she best knew how to maximise her brother's formidable talent.

Recently, Donatella, a turbo-charged blonde with a heavy-duty Marlboro habit and a don't-give-a-damn attitude, had taken over some of the publicity-driven duties and Versace, who suffered cancer of the ear last year, took a back seat. Maybe he really was settling down with those gardening books.

Gianni Versace, designer, born December 2, 1946; died July 15, 1997

Gianni Versace . . . never jaded, always generous, and quintessentially Italian

PHOTOGRAPH: HERB RITTS

Geraint Morris

Young wonder of television's golden age

GERAINT Morris, head of drama at Harlech Television, and greatly responsible for the success of the series *Casualty*, was a member of that band of television producers whose roots went back to the brave days when popular drama was being turned out in volume and at a fraction of the current cost.

Alan Plater, doyen of British TV writers, placed him in his top six of all time, along with David Rose and the late Innes Lloyd. Yet Morris was only 56 when he died from cancer, whereas the other greats are — or would be — in their seventies. Morris was 22 when, in 1963, he joined BBC Wales straight from Cardiff College of Music and Drama; he had studied at University College, Bangor.

By 1971, he was directing episodes of *Softly, Softly* and *Barlow's Law* — both spin-offs from the ground-breaking police series *Z-Cars*. Then from 1973-76 he produced *Softly, Softly*, and should anyone be unclear about the different roles and importance of director and producer, listen to Alan Plater and to another veteran who wrote for the show, Allan Prior. "We all loved his Welsh *hwl*," says Plater, "his readiness to take risks and take the responsibility if something didn't quite work. I saw his job as standing between me and the shit when it flew."

"He was such a good-looking young man," says Prior, "that when I first saw him I thought he must be one of the actors. He was always very keen, very cheerful, excellent at keeping casts happy. And helpful. I'd written a story based on the actual case of a thief who used to work the tower blocks of council flats. The police were convinced it was an inside job because there was never a break-in, never a lock forced or a window smashed. In fact, he was a cat burglar with a cat's nerves. He'd climb from balcony to balcony, without ropes, and let himself in through the balcony doors.

"I'd finished the script. We were ready to go when Geraint came to me and said, 'There's one small snag. No stunt man is going to do that for what we pay. Not without a rope, he isn't.' Help! What could we do? 'What we will do,' said Geraint, 'is sit down together and re-organise the action so that every time the rope would show we cut away to another shot.' And that's what we did."

Morris went on to produce the last two years of the sailing-ship series *The Onedin Line*, which he used to refer to affectionately as the *One-Din Line*, not noted for the bounty of the meals it served. His joke became general when the BBC followed this show with one about a cargo airline which had only one aircraft. Officially it was called *Buccaneer*, but in the business it was known as *The One-Crate Line*.

A move to BBC Scotland to oversee *King's Royal*, set in whisky business, gave Morris one of his few less-than-successes. The policewoman series *Juliet Bravo*, which he took over in 1983, went some way to restoring his steady record, then came *Casualty*. I never cared much for this stroppy hospital saga but it certainly attracted attention. Morris was responsible for the first three series, 1986-88, and another two in 1990-92.

Between these spells he made a useful career move for any TV executive, and gained experience of the opposition. He went to Thames Television as a producer on the long-running cop-shop drama *The Bill*, just when it was being remodelled as a twice- or thrice-weekly series instead of the longer once-a-week format.

The Bill belongs to London. *Casualty* was set in a fictional south-western city, *Juliet Bravo* in the north. Not until 1993 did Morris turn his eyes back to his native Wales, and not until 1994 did he join HTV, where in addition to the detective series *Wycliffe*, he produced a number of Welsh-language programmes, notably the award-winning film *Yn Gymysg Oll i Gyd*.

But his crowning achievement must be the gem of a film he made for the independent outfit Red Rooster just before joining HTV. This was *Selected Exits*, based on the life and lurches of Gwyn Thomas, a gifted Welsh writer who somehow ended up as a windbag on TV. Alan Plater, again, had taken an option on Thomas's own account of his wrong turning, written a draft screenplay and persuaded Sir Anthony Hopkins to play the part.

But it was Morris who showed Plater round the locations of the story, who imparted Welshness to him, who produced the film and who — when at the end of 1993 there was no single-play outlet left on British television — smuggled it on to the air as a literary programme, in the BBC's *Bookmark* series.

"He was," says Plater, "the best of the old in-house producers of the sort they now seem to want to get rid of at all costs."

Morris survived by his wife Sian and sons, Steffan and Simon.

Philip Purser

Geraint Morris, TV producer, born March 28, 1941; died July 11, 1997

Birthdays

Ven George Austin, Archdeacon of York, 66; **Prof Anita Brookner**, novelist, 59; **Margaret Court**, former Wimbledon champion, 55; **Frank Field**, MP, minister for welfare reform, 55; **Shirley Hughes**, illustrator, 70; **Anthony Julius**, solicitor, 41; **Tom Rosenthal**, publisher, 62; **Pinchas Zukerman**, violinist, 49.

Death Notices

LITTHAUER, Ernst Karl, OBE, died July 10th 1997 in his sleep, aged 81, after a long illness bravely borne. Will be sadly missed by his family and his many friends. Funeral to take place on Wednesday July 23rd at Lodge Hill Crematorium, Birmingham at 2.30pm. No flowers please. Donations to St. Mary's Hospice, 178 Reddicham Rd. Sally Park, Birmingham B29 7DA.

Marriages

SAYNOR/JOHNSON. On July 12th at Ludlow John Saynor to Liz Johnson.

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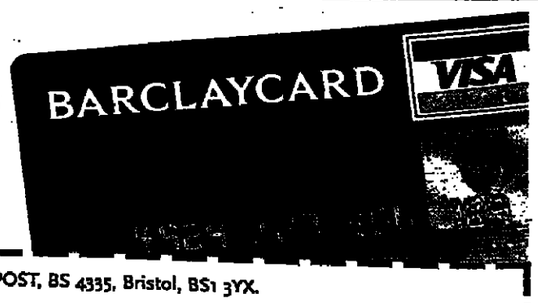

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Pension companies give 'poor value', page 12
UK firms feel export squeeze, page 12

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

FinanceGuardian

BT freed of golden share

Simon Beavis
Industrial Editor

BRITISH Telecom last night won complete independence from the state when, 13 years after privatisation, the Government gave up its protective golden share. Theoretically, the move leaves the multi-billion-pound privatised group open to takeover.

Although the move was seen as an eventual formality, the timing baffled onlookers as it comes when BT is suffering some of its worst agonies since it joined the private sector. These are due to its bungled attempt to merge with the US long-distance phone operator MCI.

News that the golden share was to be redeemed came from Trade Secretary Margaret Beckett in a Parliamentary answer late yesterday and it emerged shortly afterwards that BT is preparing to incorporate its new-found freedoms at today's AGM in Edinburgh, where directors are braced for a shareholder revolt over the attempted £12 billion merger.

In a written reply, Mrs Beckett said the decision had been taken "in the context of increasing competition in the UK telecoms sector as well as international developments such as the proposed merger with MCI".

BT's chief executive, Sir Peter Bonfield, said: "This is the final step in BT disengaging itself from the last trace of government control after 13 years in the private sector. It sends a signal to the outside world that BT operates in a normal competitive environment, with the same opportunities and constraints as other commercial organisations."

BT had asked the last government to relinquish the share and put a renewed request to Whitehall after the general election. The company was surprised but delighted that the Government had acted so promptly.

The move means that a foreign national can now sit as chairman and chief executive of the group, and that the Government will have no role in enforcing the company's articles of association, including a provision that no one group can own more than 15 per cent of the shares.

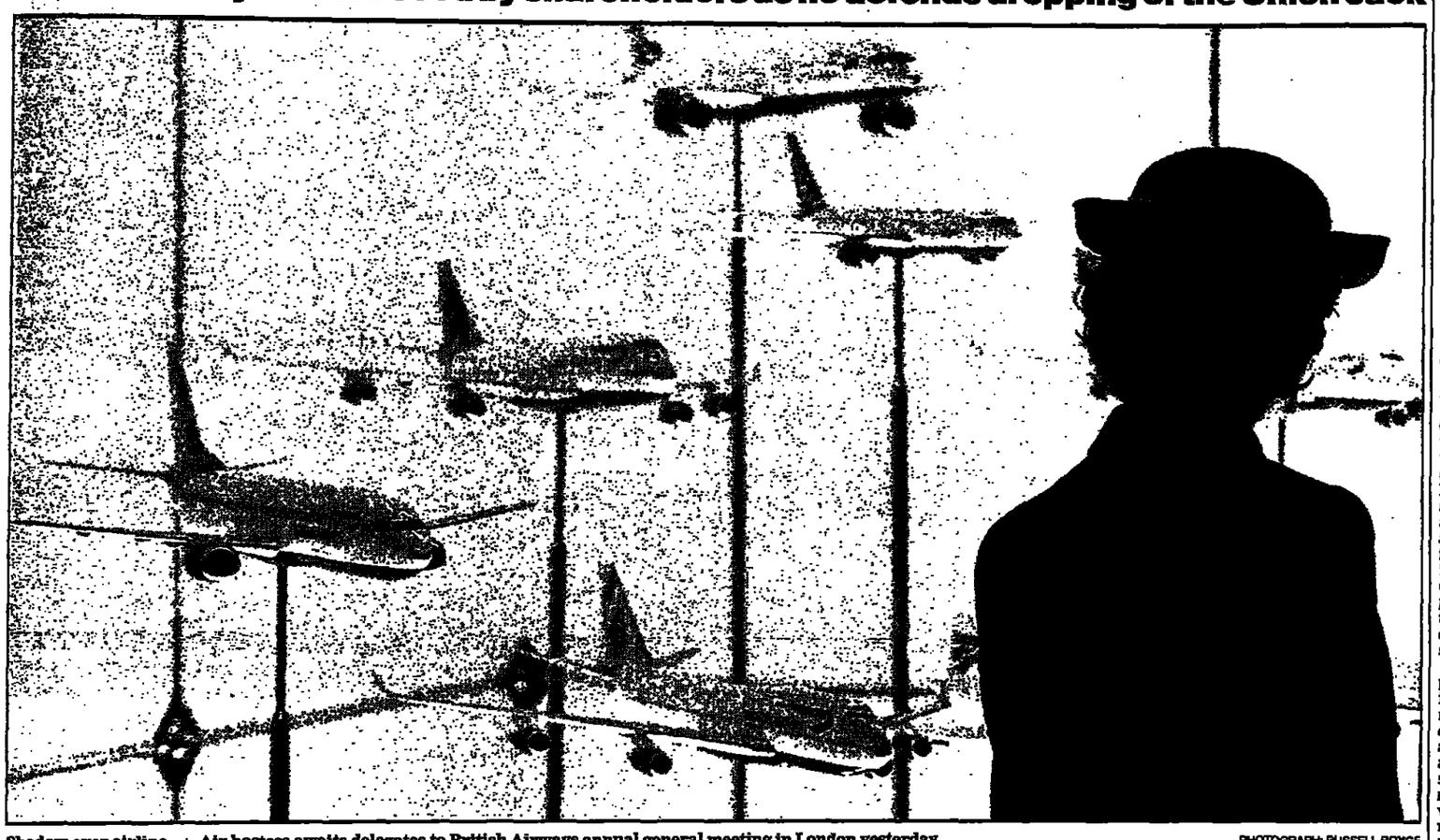
BT said last night it had no intention of relaxing the 15 per cent holding stipulation. But experts pointed out that many of the regional electricity companies maintained a similar rule after they lost the protection of golden shares and within months were facing takeover activity which has seen all but one change hands and six of the 12 pass into US control.

A bid for BT is only a remote possibility, not least because of its sheer market size. The company has a market capitalisation of £28.9 billion, even after last Friday's £2 billion collapse in its share price following the disclosure that MCI had been hit by $1.2 billion of unforeseen losses as a result of its attempt to break into America's local phone market.

BT and government sources denied that the redemption of the golden share was a prerequisite for getting approval from the US regulatory authorities for the creation of the joint BT/MCI grouping, which is to be called Concert. But observers believe it will send a clear signal to the US authorities and other companies that BT is free of any lingering state control.

At today's AGM some investors will demand that the MCI deal be renegotiated and others will seek BT's withdrawal, but the US group insisted last night that the deal was on course and MCI president Tim Price denied he was facing pressure from BT to resign for his part in failing to predict the huge losses.

British Airways chief booed by shareholders as he defends dropping of the Union Jack



Shadow over airline . . . Air hostess awaits delegates to British Airways annual general meeting in London yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: RUSSELL BOYCE

Carrier resists EU call to give up Heathrow slots for US link

Ian King

BRITISH Airways insisted yesterday it is resisting plans for it to give up hundreds of landing slots at Heathrow Airport as the price for gaining clearance from EU regulators for its alliance with American Airlines.

BA said it hopes that the alliance, which was announced in June last year, would still be cleared in time for the two airlines to start working together by summer next year.

But at BA's agm, at London's Barbican Centre, chief executive Robert Ayling said the company was still opposing demands being made by EU regulators.

Responding to a question from shareholder Ian Sutton, Mr Ayling said BA had never suggested that it should give up some 168 landing slots in return for the alliance being cleared, as had been suggested in some quarters.

Mr Ayling said the suggestion — which has since been rejected by Karel Van Miert, the EU's competition commissioner — had in fact been made by John Bridgeman, director-general of the Office of Fair Trading.

He added: "Some people have said it's not enough, but I note that most of them were our competitors. I think 168 is a very large number of slots, which would make it very difficult to proceed with the alliance."

Recent reports have suggested that BA might have to give up as many as 400 slots, but although Mr Ayling said he could not be categoric, he would not agree to any conditions which were not in BA's interests.

Meanwhile, Mr Ayling also had to endure a barrage of questions from shareholders angry at BA's recent £60 million facelift, which has seen the old Union Jack-style logo replaced with "ethnic" designs.

Mr Ayling, who was booed by several shareholders, said the revamp had been necessary because BA — which now depends on overseas markets for some 60 per cent of customers — wanted to be seen as an international company.

Mr Ayling, insisted BA had no plans to change its name or to drop the title "British".

BA's chairman, Sir Colin Marshall, also admitted during the meeting that BA was continuing to suffer from the strength of sterling.

BA shares closed 9p lower at 678½p.

Brussels backs rebuff of Boeing proposals

THE European Commission moved closer last night to rejecting the planned merger between Boeing and McDonnell Douglas — and thereby unleashing a trade war with the US, writes Julie Wolf in Brussels.

The 21-strong commission issued a statement backing the tough stance taken by Competition Commissioner Karel Van Miert in talks with Boeing. EU sources said Boeing's negotiators were flying back to the US after days of discussions failed to produce a compromise that would allow Brussels to clear the $14 billion deal.

"Unless the legitimate competition concerns of the commission can be met and genuine choice maintained for purchasers of aircraft worldwide, the commission could not approve the merger," a spokesman said.

Mr Van Miert is likely to get similar backing from an advisory committee of national anti-trust officials, which meets today to be briefed about the talks with Boeing.

Boeing last night expressed hope, however, of reaching an agreement with the commission. "We believe that the proposals put forward [by Boeing] are an honest effort to meet the commission's concerns. I'm hopeful there will be a deal," Jim Frank, Boeing's vice-president for European affairs, said.

Notebook

Key to pensions is portability

Mark Milner

LATER this week the Government will announce a thorough-going review of pension provision in the UK, which is expected to lead to a green paper on reform some time next year. Yesterday, the Office of Fair Trading made a stab at laying out what is wrong and suggesting solutions.

The OFT is trenchant in its view of the industry. It is not just a question of obvious scandals, such as Maxwell or mis-selling. Consumer detriment, says the OFT, is widespread. Personal pensions are often poor value, charges too high.

Occupational schemes punish early leavers — yet few can expect to spend their working lives with only one employer. Some direct contribution schemes may give employees a false sense of security. Perhaps the most galling criticism for the industry is that fund managers just aren't worth the money.

The OFT's solution is to come up with a pension which can be carried from job to job; one which is passive (that is, it simply tracks market movements, rather than seeking to second guess them) and where expenses represent a fixed proportion of the fund's value. And it wants legislation to ensure employers contribute to its designated personal pensions, as it dubs them, just as they would to a conventional occupational scheme.

Given the evolution of employment patterns, portability makes sense. So does the recommendation on employer contributions. Tracker funds are a trickier issue. They can and do save money, but it should be remembered that if most funds are passively invested they simply track the movements caused by a diminishing band of active investors.

The OFT's criticisms and solutions look to be broadly in tune with its remit which is to protect those buying pension provision — though it might have done more on cost. The Government, however, will need to go further. It will need to make sure properly funded pension provision is widely available. In particular, it will need to plan now for what is to happen to those, often in low-paid jobs or unemployed, who are not members of occupational or private pension schemes. Delay would be dangerous.

Muted celebration

BT'S relationship with the Blair administration is an up and down affair. Only a few weeks ago, BT chairman Sir Iain Vallance was fulminating over the company's inclusion in Chancellor Gordon Brown's windfall tax net. Yesterday, BT was celebrating the Government's decision to cancel the golden share put in place when BT was privatised 13 years ago.

Expectations of what will happen now should be muted. BT's market capitalisation is not far adrift of £30 billion, so no-one is likely to rush in with a takeover bid this morning just because the golden share has gone. Events at MCI could drag BT's share price down to vulnerable levels but any such vulnerability would vanish at the faintest whiff of a bid.

The telecommunications industry does, of course, have some chunky players but if the unthinkable did happen the Department of Trade and Industry and Oftel could (and should) think of other ways of blocking a politically unacceptable bid. The company's own articles still restrict foreign ownership, though experience suggests that is a breach which can be forced.

Nonetheless, the move is more than symbolic. BT may have no plans to lift the limit on foreign shareholdings but as global alliances evolve it may prefer to see the ceiling raised. Nor is there any compelling reason why the boss must be British — as long as he lives in the UK.

Yesterday's move pushed BT one step deeper into the private sector. Its dominance of the UK domestic market, however, means it cannot yet be allowed to go all the way. Oftel, not the market, is still the consumer's best defence.

No substitute

SPEAKING of BT; director Alan Rudge, who was becalmed in the Atlantic this week and who faced an early hours helicopter dash to reach the company's annual meeting, must have more than a passing sympathy with the aims of Railtrack in trying to get board business transacted by telephone. The extra revenue might come in handy, too.

The first thing to acknowledge about the Railtrack move is that directors' working lives have changed markedly since what is now regarded as the norm. Far from directors sharing the same offices, many now no longer work in the same cities, others operate in different countries and continents.

But has the change been sufficiently radical to justify the solution proposed by Railtrack? The answer must be "no". Individual telephone conversations cannot be a substitute for round table discussions and questions. In particular, there must be a risk that the influence of non-executive directors could be eroded.

Railtrack's proposals to allow decisions required between scheduled board meetings to be taken on the basis of a two-strong quorum and phone consultation would, no doubt, be convenient. Rather larger, more widespread, organisations manage well enough with the current situation. Railtrack should, too. Mobile phones have no place in corporate governance.

Railtrack rings boardroom changes

Plan to consult directors by phone causes uproar among investors, say Lisa Buckingham and Simon Beavis

UNPRECEDENTED proposals to allow Railtrack chairman Sir Robert Horton to hold board meetings through a series of one-to-one telephone calls have caused uproar among investors.

Sir Robert is known as a forceful personality and the notion of the nation's rail network being managed by phone has raised fears that the boardroom "checks and balances" that have been at the centre of more than five years of corporate governance reform could be breached.

A resolution to amend the company's articles of association will be put to shareholders at the annual meeting on July 24.

Investors have been particularly disturbed that the resolution includes a provision making it possible for a Railtrack board meeting to be declared in session on a quorum of only two directors — suggesting that the new provision could be used for important executive decisions rather than just consultation.

There are 12 directors on the board of the company. But the provision would allow Sir Robert to consult by phone only those directors in the UK in between the regular full monthly meetings of the board.

Pirc, the corporate governance advisory group, has expressed concern about the change, which Railtrack says simply updates the chairman's ability to consult directors by letter.

Anne Simpson of Pirc said: "We think this sets an unhealthy precedent and believe it is not in the interests of shareholders. Why have a board at all at Railtrack, why not just have Bob Horton with a mobile?"

A Railtrack spokeswoman stressed that the company would use the new freedom only when decisions had to be taken between scheduled board meetings. Unanimous decisions would be needed among all the directors who were in the UK at the time, she added.

She denied that Sir Robert was more likely to be able to influence directors over the telephone than he was by letter.

But investors remain concerned about the Railtrack move, not least because of Sir Robert's reputation as one of Britain's most pugnacious businessmen.

He has been no stranger to City controversy since he was abruptly ousted from his post as chairman and chief executive of BP as the oil company plunged into its worst financial crisis.

Investors believe the attempt to push through provisions allowing him to consult other board members individually by phone could be emulated by other companies, to the detriment of their shareholders.

Critics say it would cut out collective boardroom discussion and agreement, and make it harder for non-executives to carry out their duty to protect shareholder interests by scrutinising the behaviour of executive directors.

Pirc is understood to have written to Railtrack twice to complain and seek explanations. The organisation has also sought legal advice about the manoeuvre.

The corporate governance reforms were born out of a series of boardroom disasters in the 1980s, notably at Maxwell Communication Corporation where a forceful chairman was thought to have exercised excessive individual power over co-directors.

This prompted the establishment of the Cadbury committee, which issued the first set of recommendations on modern boardroom ethics.

These included the splitting of the roles of chairman and chief executive, and the presence of a body of powerful non-executive directors to stand up to those charged with the day-to-day running of a company.

Champagne party ends in acrimony

Ian King

PEACE talks between prospective merger partners Guinness and Grand Metropolitan and their biggest single shareholder, the French luxury goods group Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessey, appeared to be in ruins last night.

Guinness and GrandMet's record £34 billion merger is opposed by LVMH, which wants to combine the trio's drinks interests, creating the world's biggest drinks group. Negotiations begun last week, aimed at reaching a compromise, collapsed spectacularly.

The compromise deal is thought to have centred on LVMH giving Guinness and GrandMet its cognac business, Hennessy, in return for it taking full control of the Moët champagne operation.

But in an astonishing series of exchanges, each side accused the other of having come up with the proposal, and claimed in turn to have rejected it.

LVMH said Guinness and GrandMet had proposed such a deal to its chairman, Bernard Arnault, in a meeting on the French company's private jet at Northolt airport, west London, last Friday.

However, LVMH said there was "no question" that Moët Hennessy would be split, or any "cognac-for-champagne" swap would take place.

An LVMH spokeswoman said: "In the discussions that have taken place, there has been a suggestion, and it was a verbal suggestion by the British, of a split between champagne and cognac.

"This is not a solution LVMH wishes to pursue or one which is being studied, and we are still working on the idea of a three-way alliance."

A spokesman for Guinness and GrandMet insisted LVMH had proposed splitting Moët Hennessey, but that was not in the interests of Guinness and GrandMet shareholders.

He added: "Arnault can't say he wasn't taking this seriously, since he sent his finance director over to outline these new proposals. At first glance they don't look like a winner, but we will continue to look at them."

Soaring sterling 'puts 100,000 jobs at risk'

STERLING'S storming rise on the foreign exchange threatens to wipe out 100,000 factory jobs as exporters lose market share, according to former Treasury "wise man" Andrew Sentance, writes Richard Thomas.

Although strong home-grown demand will offset some of the dip in overseas sales, the pound's rise through the three-mark barrier will shave 2 per cent off manufacturing output over the next year, said Dr Sentance, who now heads the London Business School's Centre for Economic Forecasting. Sterling dipped slightly yesterday, as dealers reacted to German hints of intervention to prop up the ailing German mark, but remained over the three-mark cutoff, closing at DM3.0125.

Theo Waigel, the German finance minister, said the dollar's strength against the D-mark was an "over-reaction" and said he was talking to counterparts in other countries about the possibilities of concerted action to halt the greenback's rise. Dealers said the German authorities were trying to talk up the mark.

Dr Sentance said sterling was over-valued at current levels, and should ease back over the rest of the year. He pencilled in a DM2.60 pound by the end of 1998, but warned the Bank of England to tread carefully on interest rates.

"The Bank was right to limit its recent increase to a quarter of one percentage point," he said. "A rise in interest rates to around 7 per cent later this year should be sufficient to create an orderly slowdown."

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Cyprus 0.8660	India 60.31	Norway 12.32	Switzerland 2.42
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Pension companies 'provide poor value'

Richard Miles

PENSION companies, still reeling from the £4 billion mis-selling scandal, took another drubbing yesterday when the Office of Fair Trading branded their products "poor value" and demanded radical reform.

John Bridgeman, director-general of fair trading, said a 10-month inquiry had uncovered "widespread consumer detriment" in personal and occupational pensions — days before the Government is expected to announce a wide-ranging review of pensions.

Mr Bridgeman says workers in salary-linked company pension schemes are often heavily penalised if they change jobs, with some early leavers losing 30 per cent of their pensions. Holders of private plans suffer because of the high cost of marketing and selling policies.

Mr Bridgeman also attacked the City investment community, declaring there was "no convincing evidence that fund managers can consistently outperform the market over the period of a pension plan, although the industry does not like to face up to this".

He added: "Radical changes in attitude and provision are required if consumers' interests are to be adequately safeguarded by the UK pensions industry." Mr Bridgeman steered clear, however, of recommending any reforms to the marketing and selling of pensions, where so many of the problems with private plans have arisen.

The centrepiece of the OFT's proposals is a new type of portable pension, known as a designated personal pension. Primarily aimed at the 25 per cent of employees who make no pension provision, the DPP would be a low-cost alternative to occupational and personal pensions. It would be sold through trade unions, building societies and friendly societies.

Money invested in a DPP would be put into an index tracker fund, which mirrors the performance of the UK stock market, and then be gradually transferred into index-linked gilts during the 10 years before retirement. Charges would be a fixed proportion of the fund's value, and holders who qualified for an occupational scheme would be eligible to receive, in lieu, a contribution from their employer.

The Department of Social Security welcomed the OFT's blueprint for reform, saying the ideas were in line with its own thinking. Harriet Harman, Social Security Secretary, is expected to launch a review of pensions on Thursday with a view to publishing a green paper next year.

Pensions minister John Denham said the report was a valuable contribution. "The aims which lie behind the designated personal pension reflect the Government's belief that a new framework for value-for-money, flexible and secure second pensions should be developed," he said.

Consumer groups also gave a warm welcome to the OFT's findings, with some hoping that this would be the "final nail in the coffin of personal pensions". The Consumers' Association suggested, however, that the Government could go further by removing tax relief on personal pensions with punitively high charges and by introducing mandatory contributions for all workers.

The Association of British Insurers said: "We agree with a lot of the content. Pensions should be simpler, more accessible. Where we differ is that we don't agree that one product would be suitable for everyone. They need a choice of product and provider."

Roche cashes in on currency's depreciation against the pound

Outlook/While UK firms feel exports squeeze others flourish, says JULIA FINCH

WHILE British firms bemoan the strength of sterling for playing havoc with their exports and foreign earnings, companies in countries with weakening currencies are cashing in.

Switzerland may seem an unlikely candidate for depreciating currency, but its normally rock-solid Swiss franc has taken something of a hammering in recent months — from SwFr1.70 to the pound just 18 months ago to yesterday's SwFr2.46 — and some of the country's biggest corporations are making windfall gains as a result.

Yesterday, Basle-based drugs giant Roche showed just what currency gains can do. Its latest sales figures — for the first six months of the year — climbed by 20 per cent on the same period in 1996 to 9.3 billion Swiss francs, or £3.8 billion. Strip out the impact of currency gains and the rise was just 6 per cent.

Nevertheless, analysts greeted the figures — published a month ahead of Roche's half-year financial report — as an impressive result. In the first quarter, after stripping out currency effects, sales were ahead just 3 per cent. So the 6 per cent half-year figure means growth of some 9 per cent in the most recent three months.

One London drugs analyst said: "I would say overall these are encouraging results. Certainly they are an improvement on the first quarter, which is good."

Another immediately upgraded Roche shares to a buy recommendation.

Mark Browne, an analyst at SBC Warburg, said Roche was clearly "back on track with the market as far as revenue is concerned". He added: "The numbers were positively surprising, as people were expecting lacklustre sales after the sluggish first quarter."

Roche has a product range which spans transplant surgery drugs to indigestion tablets and food flavourings, but 64 per cent of its sales — worth £2.4 billion in the first six months — are in the pharmaceuticals division.

Its pharmaceutical sales rose 20 per cent in Swiss francs, even though Roche has now lost vital patent protection for its anti-epilepsy treatment Rivotril and faces new competition from cheaper generic drugs. Its top-selling prescription drugs continued to show double-digit growth, while sales of its Aids treatment Invirase and CellCept, used in organ transplants, more than doubled compared with the first half of 1996.

Meanwhile, Roche is waiting for regulatory approval on three new drugs: Posicor, for angina and hypertension, Tasmar, for Parkinson's disease, and Xenical, an anti-obesity treatment. All three should be on the market in the US and Europe by the end of this year and Roche has beefed up its sales force ready for the new product launches.

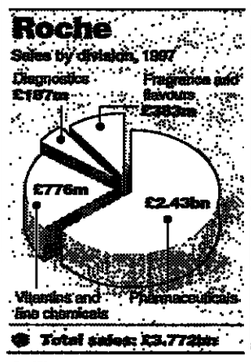
Sales of non-prescription medicines — including such brands as Redoxon effervescent vitamin C and Rennie indigestion tablets — were also "up by two figures".

Sales of vitamins and fine chemicals — a fifth of group sales — were ahead 16 per cent in Swiss francs and 3 per cent in local currencies. Demand in Europe and North America is restrained, says Roche, but growth is strong in China, Latin America and south-east Asia.

In diagnostics — where products include HIV blood-testing kits — sales were up 27 per cent in Swiss francs and 15 per cent in local currencies, well ahead of the market average.

Turnover in fragrances and flavours swelled 25 per cent in Swiss francs and 12 per cent in local terms. The figures include sales from Roche's Tastemaker unit, a US flavourings firm bought for $1 billion (£600 million) in April. The deal made Roche the world's largest supplier of flavours.

Roche reckons sales growth will be at least 6 per cent — the expected market average — in local currencies for 1997. But analysts are hopeful sales will continue to increase in the second half of the year. They are pinning their hopes on the firm's three new drugs, which they believe could have sales of SwFr2 billion — around £800 million — in five years' time.



Swiss Bank Corp invests £340m to gain first foothold in Japan

Julia Finch

THE Swiss Bank Corporation has taken a further step towards realising its ambition of becoming one of the world's leading investment banks with a £340 million investment to gain a foothold in Japan.

SBC is investing 65 billion yen in the Japanese Long Term Credit Bank ahead of the country's Big Bang financial deregulation programme which will erase the traditional divide between banks and brokers and is due to begin next Spring.

The Japanese deal gives SBC entry into what has been a closed market and is expected to be the first of many such deals involving Japanese financial groups.

SBC's Tokyo link comes less than two months after its SBC Warburg investment banking division spent £370 million on US bank Dillon, Read to get a presence on Wall Street.

It snatched the US mergers and acquisition specialist from Dutch banking group ING.

Under the terms of the Japanese deal, SBC and LTCB will create three new Japan-based joint ventures in investment banking, asset management and private banking. The two banks are taking a 3 per cent stake in each other's shares.

As a result, LTCB and SBC will rank among each other's top five shareholders. Analysts said the deal was good news for both parties.

LTCB — Japan's eighth biggest bank — has suffered from a substantial bad-debt burden and the SBC deal will give it new financial muscle. LTCB yesterday said it was considering a 200 billion yen capital raising by issuing 130 billion yen in preferred stock and 70 billion yen in debt. SBC will hold half of the preferred stock in its investment portfolio.

But LTCB President Katsunobo Ohnogi dismissed suggestions that SBC was bailing out his bank.

He admitted LTCB was "still in the middle" of sorting out its bad debts, but said the SBC joint ventures would be managed as equal partnerships.

The investment banking venture, to be called LTCB SBC Warburg, will merge the Tokyo securities arms of both banks. It will start operations early next year with 700 employees and plans to bring in a further 300.

The asset management venture is to be called LTCB SBC Brinson. LTCB's existing asset management business is Japan's third-largest private pension fund manager with 1 trillion yen under managment.

The private banking venture will be a new operation offering sophisticated services to very wealthy clients. There are currently no private banks in Japan.

New signing Stan Collymore prompts chase for more seats — and more capacity — at Villa Park PHOTOGRAPH: TIM MATTHEWS

Villa season tickets score with fans

Ian King

ASTON Villa, which floated on the stock market in May, said yesterday it was planning to increase capacity at Villa Park due to booming demand for tickets.

With a month to go before the new football season kicks off, Villa said season tickets had already topped 20,000, against 14,000 sold at the same time last year.

Villa's multi-millionaire chairman, Doug Ellis, said that because of the increased demand the club was looking at detailed proposals to increase the stadium's capacity from 39,000 to over 45,000.

He said such an improvement would cost Villa £11.5 million, while raising capacity to above 50,000, would boost spending by an another £4.5 million.

The news came as Villa announced a full-year pre-tax loss of £3.9 million, due to net transfer spending of £9.3 million on players like Fernando Nelson, Sasa Curcic and Stan Collymore.

Ignoring the transfers, Villa notched up an operating profit of £5.4 million against £6.2 million last time, slightly better than most City analysts had been expecting.

Villa shares rose 22½p to 935p on the results.

Announcing the figures, Mr Ellis — nicknamed "Deadly Doug" for his penchant for sacking managers — said he expected to see Villa competing for honours again next season, while profits off the field would be boosted by the Premier League's new £670 million TV deal with BSkyB.

However, Mr Ellis was less optimistic about the possible introduction of pay-per-view television for football, insisting he did not expect to see it introduced for several years.

Mr Ellis, who also admitted he was slightly disappointed at Villa's share price since flotation, added: "Being a pessimist, and perhaps very conservative, I don't think much will happen until the 1999/2000 season. But it's going to happen for sure."

Fraud-busting computer is paying its way

Dan Atkinson

THE Stock Exchange's "billion-dollar brain" anti-fraud computer is earning its keep by boosting the number of insider dealers brought to justice, figures showed yesterday.

Twenty-one insider-dealing inspections were handled by government investigators during the year to the end of March, up from 13 the previous year.

This represented a higher volume of case references from the exchange, the Department of Trade and Industry said; the exchange confirmed this trend marked the first fruits of its Imas artificial intelligence system, designed in partnership with the University of London to track all shares deals and "second-guess" insider dealers and other fraudsters.

Four insider dealers were prosecuted by the DTI during the year and two were convicted.

Elsewhere in the department, officers investigated 221 companies (against 210 in the previous year) and took action in 132 cases. Thirty-eight companies were wound up and nine people were convicted of offences related to these investigations.

Ace catalogue of 1,000 rock 'n' roll classics sold to Grade's VCI

EARL King, the voice behind Those Lonely, Lonely Nights (pictured), and Jimmy Clanton, who wowed post-war baby-boomers in their teenage years with Venus in Blue Jeans, are the latest additions to VCI's growing stable, *writes David Gow.*

The independent book, CD and video firm, chaired by ex-Channel 4 boss Michael Grade and riding high on sales of Manchester United videos, yesterday snapped up for £2 million the Ace Records catalogue of record masters and music publishing rights.

King, Clanton and other Ace alumni like Huey "Piano" Smith, of Rocking Pneumonia and the Boogie Woogieflu fame and Frankie Ford of Sea Cruise, figure in the Ace catalogue of around 1,000 rock'n'roll/r&b classics from the 1950s and 1960s.

Ageing rockers can, VCI said, soon hear these ancient hits on CD.

Kenwood decides the Pifco mix would not be palatable

Ian King

KENWOOD Appliances, the kettle and food mixer group, has spurned a takeover approach from its smaller rival, Pifco, after talks between the pair collapsed. However, Kenwood said it was still open to any proposals that could lead to a takeover, provided they offered sufficient value to its shareholders.

Kenwood originally received an approach from Pifco last December, shortly after defeating calls from the controversial UK Active Value Fund — its biggest single shareholder — to put itself up for sale.

Kenwood held talks with Pifco but said yesterday it had decided that the approach would not lead to a satisfactory offer.

Colin Gordon, Kenwood's new chief executive, said: "The position is, that were someone to come forward with an offer which we believe is in the best interest of the shareholder, of course we will look at it."

Kenwood, which in January parted company with previous chief executive Tim Beech, announced full year pre-tax losses of £11.4 million, against previous year profits of £15.6 million. The company is not paying a dividend.

The loss was caused principally by a one-off hit of £15.5 million, due mainly to reorganisation and restructuring costs, although underlying profits also fell sharply.

Announcing the loss, Mr Gordon said Kenwood was still experiencing difficulties in certain key markets, while the strength of sterling was also hurting the company.

He said that a profit improvement programme had now been put in place, which would improve margins and reduce the company's cost base.

Shares in Kenwood, which has issued two profits warnings over the past year, closed 3½p down at 118p.

NOTICE OF INTEREST RATE VARIATION

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Bank of Scotland announces a change in the monthly rate of interest charged to our Classic Visa Card/MasterCard, Affinity MasterCard, Unity First MasterCard and Global Visa Card Cardholders.

The monthly rate will be increased to 1.53%.

Interest will be charged at the new rate and shown on cardholders' statements issued from 22nd August, 1997, and for balances left outstanding from statements dated 23rd July, 1997 and after.

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Yarmouth runners and riders

	CHRIS HAWKINS	TOP FORM
1.50	Soda Pop	Soda Pop
2.25	Royal Rights	Jus'chillin'
2.55	Prima Verde	Prima Verde
3.30	Blueygreen (nb)	Blueygreen
4.00	Inaroz	Inaroz
4.30	Tumbleweed Ridge	Yorkie George
5.00	Blockade	Urgent Swift

Left-handed, oval track of 1m5f with 5f run-in. Straight mile.
Going: Good. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Draw: Middle to high numbers best up to 1m.
Long distance travellers: Blueygreen (3.30) P Chapple-Hyam, Wilts 208 miles. Stone of Destiny (2.25) & Tumbleweed Ridge (4.30) B Meehan, Berks 190 miles. Pleading (4.30) H Candy, Oxon 182 miles. Premier Generation (IRE) (5.00) D Arbuthnot, Berks 177 miles. Danzino (IRE) (2.25), Sue's Return (2.55), Select Choice (IRE) (3.30) & Urgent Swift (5.00) A Jarvis, Oxon 172 miles.
Seven day winners: 1.50 Guesstimation. 4.30 Tumbleweed Ridge.
Blinkered first time: 4.30 Zaretski. **Visored:** None.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J.Jumps.

1.50 UPTON SELLING STAKES
1m 2f £2,081 (6 declared)

1 (4) 063121 Guesstimation (2) (C) (G) J Pearce 8-9-12 — C Teague (5)
2 (3) 0-0204 Soda Pop (13) C Britain 3-8-10 — W J O'Connor
3 (2) 5 Ajeebah (23) W Haggas 3-8-5 — M Hills
4 (5) 050 Blazer's Baby (18) J Fanshawe 3-8-5 — N Varley
5 (1) 0-0322 Bluebell Miss (7) M Ryan 3-8-5 — G Carter
6 (6) 0-6400 Northern Touch (11) S C Williams 3-8-5 — B Williams (7)

Betting: 11-4 Guesstimation, 3-1 Soda Pop, 4-1 Ajeebah, Bluebell Miss, 11-2 Blazer's Baby, 8-1 Northern Touch.

2.25 EBF ACLE MAIDEN STAKES 2YO
6f £3,274 (8 declared)

2.55 HORSEY FILLIES' HANDICAP
1m £3,453 (10 declared)

4 (8) -00140 Our Way (18) (CD) C Britain 3-9-0 — W J O'Connor
5 (4) 20-324 Literary (13) J Gosden 3-9-0 — G Hind
6 (9) 0-33 Blowing Away (26) M Tompkins 3-9-0 — M Henry (3)
7 (3) -40258 Miss Riviera Rose (11) G Wragg 3-8-10 — M Hills
8 (6) 64-000 Badger Bay (8) C Dwyer 4-8-3 — N Varley
9 (1) 153430 Misty Cay (6) (D) S Dow 3-8-2 — G Carter
10 (10) 030-56 Go For Green (25) J Scargill 3-8-0 — F Norton

Betting: 9-4 Prima Verde, 9-2 Our Way, 6-1 Sue's Return, Rasha, 7-1 Literary, Blowing Away, 10-1 Miss Riviera Rose.

3.30 EAST COAST MAIDEN STAKES 3YO
7f £3,420 (8 declared)

4.00 TUNSTALL FILLIES' STAKES 3YO
7f £7,807 (5 declared)

4.30 FILBY BRIDGE HANDICAP
7f £7,709 (10 declared)

5.00 REPPS HANDICAP
1m 3f 101yds £3,773 (9 declared)

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Catterick

	CHRIS HAWKINS	TOP FORM
2.15	Lend A Hand	Lend A Hand (nap)
2.45	My Millie	My Millie
3.20	Geretski	Ramsey Hope
3.50	Sense Of Priority	Sense Of Priority
4.20	Moon Fairy	Mystique Air (nb)
4.50	Hadidi	Marsh Marigold

Left-handed track of just under 1m1f with 3f run-in. Sharp and undulating, unsuited to long-striding horse.
Going: Good to firm. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Draw: Low numbers preferred.
Long distance travellers: Gey Abandon (2.15) & Silver Joy (2.15) K McAuliffe, Berks 235 miles. The Roundsills (4.50) R J Houghton, Oxon 231 miles. Hadidi (4.50) D Morley & Daintree (4.20) H Collingridge, Newmarket 201 miles. Moon Fairy (4.20) J Smyth-Osbourne, Northants 183 miles. Johayro (3.20) J Goldie, Strathclyde 177 miles. Sir Tasker (3.50) & Pisum Sativum (4.20) J L Harris, Leics 137 miles.
Seven day winners: 2.15 Lend A Hand.
Blinkered first time: 4.50 Coral Island. **Visored:** None.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J.Jumps.

2.15 SWALE PASTURE NOVICE MEDIAN AUCTION STAKES 2YO
7f £2,889 (12 declared)

1 (1) 41 Buzz (23) (B) C Thornton 9-4 — Dean McKeown
2 (9) 21 Lend A Hand (7) M Johnston 9-4 — J Weaver
3 (12) Czar Wars P Dalton 8-12 — L Charnock
4 (11) 0600 Mr Fund Switch (66) D Nicholls 8-12 — Alex Greaves
5 (8) 060 On The Mat (12) J J O'Neill 8-12 — J Carroll
6 (10) 6 Western Lord (16) C Smith 8-12 — P Fessey (5)
7 (7) 00 Dougs Dream (11) Mrs A Swinbank 8-7 — S Sanders
8 (2) 00 Gey Abandon (14) K McAuliffe 8-7 — F Lynch

2.45 ST. ANNE'S CLAIMING STAKES
1m 4f £2,532 (6 declared)

3.20 LOW GREEN HANDICAP
5f £3,691 (9 declared)

1 (7) 0-5410 Susan M Whalley (8) (D) R Fahey 5-9-13 — S Winston (7)
2 (2) 050-10 Pleasure Time (46) (D) C Smith 4-9-6 — P Fessey (5) ★
3 (8) 000010 Ramsey Hope (26) (D) C Fairhurst 4-9-5 — J Weaver ★
4 (5) 034015 Captain Carat (42) (CD) D Nicholls 6-9-5 — Alex Greaves ★
5 (3) 012111 Geretski (9) (CD) N Tinkler 4-9-3 — L Charnock
6 (6) 050405 Johayro (2) (CD) J Goldie 4-9-2 — J Quinn ★

3.50 COWSTAND BRIDGE SELLING STAKES
6f £2,425 (10 declared)

4.20 PALLETT HILL MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN FILLIES' STAKES 3YO
7f £2,448 (7 declared)

4.50 BECKSIDE HANDICAP 3YO
1m 4f £3,018 (10 declared)

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Worcester (N.H.) tonight

	RON COX	TOP FORM
6.10	Kilcarne Bay	Five Flags
6.40	Mrs Doubtfire	Totally Yours
7.10	Persian Elite	Persian Elite
7.40	No Light	Verde Luna
8.10	Southernacrosspatch	O My Love
8.40	Hurricane Blake	Game Lad
9.10	Regal Absence	—

Left-handed circuit of 1m5f with 220yds run-in. Flat with easy turns, a very fair, galloping track.
Going: Chase course, Good, good to firm in places; Hurdles, Good to firm, good in places.
Long distance travellers: Bunny Hare (6.10) & Bitacrack (8.40) J Bibbet, Cumbria 211 miles. Soon Come (9.10) G Richards, Cumbria 205 miles. Ebrawe (9.10) Chris Grant, Cleveland 204 miles.
Seven day winners: 9.10 Sallin Minstrel.
Blinkered first time: 6.10 Vicar Of Bray; 7.40 Appearance Money; 8.10 Sails Legend; 8.40 Welsh Legion. **Visored:** None.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. F.Flat.

6.10 SUDDINGTON SELLING H'CAP HURDLE
2m 4f £1,965 (17 declared)

1 5P1-52 Five Flags (17) Mrs S Smith 9-12-0 — R Guest
2 224-10 Edward Seymour (17) (B) W Jenks 10-11-11 — T Jenks
3 5/4P6- Kilcarne Bay (153) P Bowen 7-11-11 — R Johnson
4 4430-4 Salonna (28) Mrs V Ward 11-11-6 — Mr R Thornton (3)
5 /0005- Father O'Brien (61) J Poulton 10-11-4 — T J Murphy
6 14PG4/ Couchant (F53) M Pipe 6-11-0 — A P McCoy
7 0401P- Persian Butterfly (F22) R Strange 5-10-13 — J Culloty
8 03P-PP Vicar Of Bray (18) (C) L Wells 10-10-6 — A Thornton ★
9 3S330/ Mick's Tycoon (F21) T Watson 9-10-3 — W Marston
10 4004/0 Castlemanch (17) B Llewellyn 9-10-3 — B Powell ★

6.40 NORTON NOVICE HURDLE
2m £2,373 (9 declared)

7.10 P & O NEDLLOYD LTD H'CAP HURDLE
2m 4f £2,215 (6 declared)

7.40 HIGH GREEN NOVICE H'CAP CHASE
2m £2,955 (13 declared)

8.10 PEOPLETON NOVICE HURDLE
2m 4f £2,198 (9 declared)

8.40 CALLOW END H'CAP CHASE
2m 7f 110yds £2,718 (14 declared)

9.10 PIRTON STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE
2m £1,256 (16 declared)

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Racing

Hawksley Hill the top draw in Trophy

Chris Hawkins

HAWKSLEY HILL had *no chance in the* Royal Hunt Cup from a high draw but, visored for the first time today, has things much more in his favour in the valuable Hong Kong Jockey Club Trophy at Sandown.

Few trainers have a better record in competitive handicaps than Lynda Ramsden and the flashy chestnut Hawksley Hill has been a major contributor over the last couple of seasons, winning the Newbury Spring Cup this year and no less than six races last season.

Hardly the sort to need a visor, you might say, but despite his consistent record Hawksley Hill has a tendency to carry his head high and there is a good chance he will be improved by the fitting of the headgear.

On good ground a high *draw — he is drawn 14 — is* considered advantageous when there is a big field racing over a mile at Sandown and Jimmy Fortune should be able to tuck in Hawksley Hill (3.10) *without conceding* too much ground at the start.

The Hunt Cup winner Red Robbo (18) has also been favoured by the draw and is sure to run well, although meeting the Ascot fourth Dancing Image, beaten a length and a half, on 4lb worse terms.

The three-year-old Cosmic Prince is another to consider. He was the comfortable winner of an Epsom handicap on Oaks day and has a decent each-way chance.

There will be no fancy odds available about Lord Of Men (2.35) in the HSBC Conditions Stakes provided the ground has not firmed up too much.

This colt, trained by John Gosden, was a high class two-year-old, but a broken pelvis kept him off the track all last season.

He came back with a fast time win at Doncaster last month and looks to have lost little of his ability.

Outsourcing (4.10), from the Paul Cole stable, may be *good enough in the Tin Tin* Daily News Stakes over seven furlongs. He seemed to improve over the trip when fourth to the highly regarded Haami at Newmarket last week.

Another to run well at Headquarters was Willow Dale (4.40), who goes for the concluding Chevalier Handicap. She was beaten just over half a length when fourth to Gone Savage in an 18 runner sprint and "won" the race on the far side.

George Duffield picked up a four-day ban for careless riding on Stand Tall at Brighton yesterday. The interference he was adjudged to have caused had a knock-on effect which led to Richard Quinn taking a heavy fall from Balance Of Power.

Quinn suffered facial cuts but expects to be fit to ride *Red Robbo today.* Sadly, Balance Of Power was put down.

Record profits as Wyatt waves goodbye to Tote

LORD WYATT yesterday signed off his 21-year reign as chairman of the Tote by announcing record profits of £12.8 million, *writes Chris Hawkins.*

This represents an increase of 21 per cent for the year ending March 31 1997, with contributions to racing hitting a new high of £8.7 million.

Wyatt, never averse to blowing his own trumpet, was in typically good form and commented: "The Tote is big business now but it wasn't when *I was* first appointed chairman. It was a shambles on the edge of bankruptcy.

"When Peter Jones takes over the chairmanship on August 1, I promise there'll be no interference from me — I'm not a backseat driver. He's got some very good cards to play and I'm predicting that in two or three years £25 million will be available to racing."

Jones, 54, emphasised this was Wyatt's "private view" although he is opti*mistic that the Tote is well* equipped with up-to-the-minute technology and computerisation to maximise profits, with the possibility of co-mingling of pool betting in the USA, France and the Far East.

But there will be no "Superbet" this year, no Tote terminals in pubs and no privatisation. Jones said: "I think 1998 would be the ideal time to introduce the Superbet but it depends how quickly we can decide on the right formula."

Brighton tonight

	CHRIS HAWKINS	TOP FORM
6.20	Aegean Dawn	High Gain
6.50	Senorita Matilda	Senorita Matilda
7.20	Cape Pigeon	Cape Pigeon
7.50	Mr Browning	Rising Dough
8.20	Interdream	Hadawah
8.50	Corniche Quest	Always Grace

U-shaped left-handed course of 1½m with 3½f run-in. Sharp and undulating.
Going: Firm. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Draw: Low numbers favoured.
Long distance travellers: Seamus (7.20) C Hill, Devon 205 miles. *Cape Pigeon (7.20) L Cottrell, Devon 165 miles. Green Dolphin (6.20)* W Turner, Somerset 125 miles.
Seven day winners: 7.50 Rising Dough.
Blinkered first time: 8.20 Keen Waters. **Visored:** None.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing

6.20 OVINGDEAN FILLIES' STAKES 2YO — SKY
5f 59yds £2,277 (6 declared)

6.50 HANGLETON MAIDEN H'CAP — SKY
6f £2,966 (10 declared)

8 (3) 000-40 Chopin (54) R J Houghton 3-8-11 — T Quinn
9 (9) 000-0 Double-E-I-B-A (14) D Cosgrove 3-8-11 — M Rimmer
10 (6) 0-0000 Seamus (23) C Hill 3-8-11 — D Sweeney (5)

Betting: 11-10 Cape Pigeon, 11-2 Without Friends, Chopin, 8-1 Hawaii Storm, Jubilee Scholar, 10-1 Hatta Sunshine

7.20 WHITE HAWK SELLING STAKES — SKY
1m £1,985 (10 declared)

1 (7) 343-01 Cape Pigeon (21) (C) (D) L Cottrell 12-9-10 — G Bolland ★
2 (10) 260000 Hatta Sunshine (7) (D) G L Moore 7-9-10 — M Wigham ★
3 (1) 000500 Hawaii Storm (2) (D) D French Davis 9-9-10 — R French (5)
4 (2) 004500 Jubilee Scholar (2) G L Moore 4-9-5 — Candy Morris
5 (4) 436004 Without Friends (18) J Pitch-Hayes 3-9-2 — B Doyle
6 (8) 000-00 Embroidered (148) S Dow 4-9-0 — M Roberts
7 (5) 58U Rossiee Royale (42) John Berry 5-9-0 — T Sprake

7.50 SOUTH DOWNS HANDICAP — SKY
1m 4f £3,550 (7 declared)

8.20 TELSCOMBE CLIFFS H'CAP 3YO — SKY
1m 2f £2,277 (11 declared)

8.50 LEWES LIMITED STAKES
5f 59yds £2,277 (6 declared)

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Doncaster evening programme

	RON COX	TOP FORM
6.30	Alconleigh	Alconleigh
7.00	Antarctic Storm	Cross The Border
7.30	Alfaheal	Kass Alhawa
8.00	Groom's Gordon	Istikbab
8.30	Titanic	Oes Singer
9.00	Inimitable	Inimitable

Left-handed, galloping track of 1m7f with 4½f run-in. Straight mile.
Going: Good. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Draw: No advantage.
Long distance travellers: Groom's Gordon (8.00) & Inimitable (9.00) J Dunlop, W Sussex 221 miles. Prince Foley (6.30) W Turner, Somerset 219 miles. Veni Vidi Vici (7.30) M Heaton-Ellis, Wilts 167 miles. Atnab (9.00) P Walwyn, Berks 167 miles. Peartree House (8.00) & Kristal Breeze (9.00) W Muir, Berks 167 miles. Alfaheal *(7.30) R J Houghton, Oxon 161 miles.*
Seven day winners: 9.00 Kristal Breeze.
Blinkered first time: None. **Visored:** 7.00 Mungo Park.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing

6.30 GRESLEY CONDITIONS STAKES 2YO — SKY
6f £4,293 (5 declared)

1 (3) 231141 Prince Foley (36) W G M Turner 9-7 — D McGaffin (7)
2 (1) 312 Alconleigh (17) (D) (BF) M Johnston 9-1 — J Weaver

7.00 SHADWELL STUD APPRENTICE H'CAP — SKY
6f £3,176 (12 declared)

3 (1) 0-0360 Broadgate Lad (17) (D) Miss S Hall 5-9-11
4 (12) -00030 The Wad (32) D Nicholls 4-9-7 — Iona Wands
5 (3) 00-030 Antarctic Storm (52) R Fahey 4-8-8 — S Winston
6 (5) 000602 Cross The Border (2) (D) (BF) D Nicholls 4-8-1 — P Roberts
7 (10) 000133 Mungo Park (11) (D) (BF) Mrs J Ramsden 3-8-0 — T E Durcan ★
8 (9) 002428 Featherstone Lane (34) (D) (BF) Miss L Siddall 6-8-9 — T Siddall (3)
9 (2) -13056 Reinhardt (8) (D) D Nicholls 4-8-8 — A Nicholls
10 (4) 100453 Southern Dominion (8) (D) Miss J Craze 5-8-5 — Carolyn Bales (5) ★
11 (11) 0300-0 Hamilton Gold (11) M Meagher 4-8-1 — G Milligan
12 (8) 634008 John O'Dreams (12) (CD) Mrs A King 12-8-1 — P Fessey

Betting: 9-2 Mungo Park, 11-2 Cross The Border, 7-1 Featherstone Lane, Superbit, 8-1 Southern Dominion, John O'Dreams, Chemcast

7.30 BAILEYS ORIGINAL IRISH CREAM H'CAP — SKY
1m (Round) £3,883 (14 declared)

8.00 HALIFAX CAR INSURANCE STAKES — SKY
1m (Straight) £4,776 (6 declared)

8.30 EBF VYNER STAKES 2YO
5f £3,147 (7 declared)

9.00 ARKSEY FILLIES HANDICAP
1m 4f £2,302 (7 declared)

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Trainer watch

Horses having their first run for a new trainer today — **Yarmouth:** 5.00 Burning, G Harwood to W Haggas. **Catterick:** 3.50 Juddy, J A Harris to J O'Reilly. **Brighton:** 7.20 Embroidered, R Flower to S Dow; 8.20 Master Bobby, R Boss to R Flower; 8.50 Agwa, R J O'Sullivan to J Bridger.
Worcester: 6.10 Couchant, J White to M Pipe; Kilcarne Bay, O Sherwood to P Bowen; Notanotherone, R Light to R Lee; 6.40 Sedbergh, M Reveley to Mrs V Ward; 7.10 Apache Park, D Burchell to A Streeter; 7.40 Cardan, A Hobbs to R Frost; Jobingo, G Price to M Madgwick; 8.10 Chilly Lad, R Juckes to R J Price; Jaflepped, J E Mulhern to P Eccles; Jump The Lights, S Woods to P Radford; O My Love, Miss H Knight to N Babbage; Sails Legend, J Long to Miss Z Davison; Southernacrosspatch, J White to P Bowen; 8.40 Hurricane Blake, C Popham to M Pipe.

Sandown with TV form

	CHRIS HAWKINS	TOP FORM
2.05	Rokeby Bowl	Technicolour
2.35	Lord Of Men	Lord Of Men
3.10	Hawksley Hill	Fly To The Stars
3.40	Blomey	Percy Isle
4.10	Outsourcing	Commander Charlie
4.40	Willow Dale (nap)	Faith Alone

Right-handed, testing course of 1m5f with 4f run-in. Straight 5f which is uphill throughout.
Going: Good to firm. ★ Denotes blinkers. ● Top form rated.
Draw: Low numbers favoured over 5f.
Long distance travellers: Fly To The Stars (3.10) M Johnston, N Yorks 249 miles. Hawksley Hill (3.10) Mrs J Ramsden, N Yorks 240 miles.
Seven day winners: None. **Blinkered first time:** None. **Visored:** 3.10 Hawksley Hill.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J.Jumps.

2.05 SINO GROUP DRAGON TROPHY STAKES — CH4
1m 3f 91yds £6,710 (5 declared)

101 (2) 02530 Forza Figlio (28) Sir M Stoute 4-9-5 — Pat Eddery
102 (1) 32605 Rokeby Bowl (11) (G) I Balding 5-9-5 — L Dettori
103 (4) 1463-3 Smart Play (20) Lord Huntingdon 4-9-5 — T Quinn
104 (5) 521 Khassah (34) E Dunlop 3-8-7 — D O'Donohoe (3)
105 (3) 1- Technicolour (287) M Stoute 3-8-5 — J Reid

Betting: 7-4 Technicolour, 5-2 Khassah, 3-1 Forza Figlio, 4-1 Rokeby Bowl, 10-1 Smart Play.

2.35 HSBC TROPHY (CONDITIONS STAKES) — CH4
1m 2f £6,359 (6 declared)

3.10 HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB TROPHY HANDICAP — CH4
1m £51,650 (18 declared)

3.40 SING TAO TROPHY HANDICAP — CH4
1m 6f £7,100 (9 declared)

4.10 TIN TIN DAILY NEWS TROPHY (AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES) 2YO
7f £3,648 (15 declared)

4.40 CHEVALIER TROPHY HANDICAP
5f £3,534 (11 declared)

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Results

BEVERLEY

4.30 (5f): 1, **YOUNG BEN**, G Parkin (33-1); 2, **Rossyholme** (16-1); 3, **Stolen Kiss** (6-1). 4, **Superfrills** (25-1). 5-2 fav Ned's Bonanza. 20 ran. Nk, 1½, 2½. (J Wainwright) Tote: £63.70; £10.80, £4.40, £1.50, £10.50. Dual F: £450.80. Trio: £1,594.20. CSF: £491.41. Tricast: £3,314.17.
5.00 (5f): 1, **LET'S BE FAIR**, E Johnson (Evens fav); 2, **Cumbrian Cadet** (100-30); 3, **Half A Knicker** (12-1). 10 ran.

BRIGHTON

4.45 (6f 209yds): 1, **BARBASON**, Candy Morris (4-1 jt-fav); 2, **Stand Tall** (9-1); 3, **Octavia Hill** (10-1). 4-1 jt-fav Mr Cube. 15 ran. ¾, sh hd. (G L Moore) Tote: £4.30; £1.60, £3.70, £3.60. Dual F: £25.80. Trio: £273.50. CSF: £38.06. Tricast: £330.32.
PLACEPOT: £228.30. **QUADPOT:** £49.40.

● Romanov (John Reid) finished third, a short head and one length behind Kirkwall and Rajpoute, in the £33,970 Prix Eugene Adam at Saint-Cloud yesterday.

KEEPING TRACK
0891 222 +

	COMMENTARY	RESULTS
SANDOWN	771	781
CATTERICK	772	782
YARMOUTH	773	783
DONCASTER (E)	774	784
BRIGHTON (E)	775	785
WORCESTER (E)	776	786

ALL COURSES COMMENTARY 0891 222 780
ALL COURSES RESULTS 0891 222 790
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The Guardian INTERACTIVE

Football

Di Canio heads Celtic problems

Russell Thomas

CELTIC are preparing to welcome another foreigner even though their general manager Jock Brown is trying to solve problems with two Continental players.

Paolo Di Canio has announced his intention of leaving next week; he spoke out only 24 hours after Celtic's new coach Wim Jansen declared he was impressed with the Italian winger's attitude in training in Ireland.

Di Canio appears still to have differences with the club chairman Fergus McCann. "I have spoken to Mr Jansen about my problem," said the Italian, "and he seems a good person. Out of respect to him I will complete my training by playing in Ireland. But I will play no more [for Celtic] after that."

Jansen fielded him in last night's 3–2 defeat by Derry City in the Dublin international tournament and he scored in the 35th minute.

Before the game Brown said: "If he has a problem then I don't know about it . . . I'm the person to speak to and nothing has been conveyed to me."

Brown hopes to complete the £2.5 million signing of Sweden's striker Henrik Larsson from Feyenoord, despite a delay while the Dutch FA investigates an alleged illegal approach for the player. Also on a busy schedule for Brown, who is charged with keeping Celtic's imports happy, is a possible flight to Portugal to talk to the striker Jorge Cadete, whose continued absence is causing concern.

"There is no doubt he [Cadete] has a health problem," Brown said. "We're keen to see him fit and playing for us. I don't think he has anything to gain from this situation: I don't see an angle there."

Meanwhile, Tomas Brolin was among five high-profile players left behind by George Graham as Leeds took a 20-man squad on tour to Sweden.

Brolin, whose future is still uncertain after his return from loan to Parma, remained in England with Ian Rush, Carlton Palmer, Tony Dorigo and Brian Deane.

"There is no point in these players going to Sweden if there is any chance that they could be leaving," said Graham. Rush, sought by Swindon, does not figure in Graham's plans, and Palmer wants a move. Dorigo and Deane are out of contract.

Ginola 'first of three' for Tottenham, says Francis

Martin Thorpe

DAVID GINOLA officially moved to Tottenham Hotspur yesterday and the manager Gerry Francis promised two more signings before the start of the season.

The Frenchman will fly out to join his new team-mates on a pre-season tour of Norway while Francis remains behind to continue negotiations with possible buys.

Spurs are still interested in signing Les Ferdinand, Ginola's former team-mate at Newcastle, but the striker is unsure about the move.

Ginola yesterday pronounced himself delighted with his £2 million transfer, signing a four-year deal at a reported £20,000 a week. There had been suggestions that the 30-year-old had joined Spurs only because of a lack of acceptable offers from other clubs, but he said: "I think Tottenham are one of the best clubs in England and I remember them as a great name in world football. It is fantastic for me to be here. My job is to help the team into Europe and in the race for the title."

Francis, who said he had been chasing the Frenchman for some time, explained that the signing accorded with his preference for wingers who can go past defenders. "He's got exceptional talent to beat people," said the manager. "It's probably the best I've seen. He can beat people by sheer ability, by a body movement, and he makes things happen. He's a great crosser of the ball with either foot."

Ginola's departure from Newcastle follows the replacement of Kevin Keegan as manager by Kenny Dalglish, which posed a problem for the Frenchman. "I came first of all for Keegan," he said, "and sometimes when a new manager arrives he's not very pleased with what some of the players do, and that applied to me. To play for a club I need to be in a good relationship with them."

Ginola's absence from the Newcastle first team for much of Dalglish's reign did not deter Francis. "He hasn't played in the last six months really," he said. "But what he showed in the 18 months before that made me very interested in him.

"He is also ambitious to get back into the French World Cup team. He has his strengths and he has his weaknesses like every player, but certainly his strength is going forward."

As for further signings, which many supporters feel are badly needed to boost the potential of the side, Francis said: "We're pretty confident that before the season starts we'll have at least two new players in the squad as well as David, and we've been negotiating on a number of counts recently to do just that."

Fair play to win rewards

PLAYERS who behave themselves on the pitch will be rewarded under a scheme announced by the FA yesterday, *writes Don Beet*. From next season anyone going five full games without receiving a yellow or red card will have a booking struck from the records.

Players on the verge of suspension will be able to delay or even prevent a ban being imposed by staying out of trouble.

On the downside for the players, the FA has arrived at a new method of totting up bookings. Previously, penalty points for yellow cards were allocated on a sliding scale, with a maximum of four points, but now all bookings will be of equal value.

Players will be banned after five yellow cards instead of six and there will be a further ban after eight bookings, and players booked 11 times will be hauled before an FA disciplinary committee.

The situation regarding sendings-off is unchanged. Bans will be for between one and three games and suspensions will come into effect 14 days after the offence.

Alvin Martin, the 38-year-old former West Ham and England centre-half, has been named manager of Southend in succession to Ronnie Whelan, who resigned this month.

Martin retired from the game in February after spending five months at Leyton Orient. He was previously at Upton Park for 23 years.

Derby County face competition for Roberto Baggio from the Serie A sides Udinese and Bologna. Udinese are reported to have offered £2 million to Milan for the 30-year-old midfielder; Bologna have offered half that but better personal terms.

However, Derby's £8 million package beats both, and the manager Jim Smith said before flying to Milan: "We are in with a chance. Exactly how big depends on progress we make in talks with Roberto and his advisers."

Crewe's 20-year-old midfielder Danny Murphy has completed a move to Liverpool put on hold last week after X-rays on his knee were inconclusive.

Bristol City's out-of-contract striker Kevin Nugent has agreed a two-year deal with Cardiff, the Watford striker Kevin Phillips has signed for Sunderland, and the Republic of Ireland midfielder Ray Houghton, freed by Crystal Palace, has joined Reading as player-coach.

Results

Football

INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT: Derry C 3, Celtic 2.

Tennis

MANCHESTER CHALLENGER (Didsbury): **First round** (GB unless stated): **J Delgado** bt C Beecher 7–6, 6–3; **T Spinks** bt N Weal 4–6, 7–6, 6–4; **C Haggard** (SA) bt A Parmar 6–3, 6–2; **O Burrieza** (Sp) bt N Gould 7–6, 6–1; **M Draper** (Aus) bt S Downs (NZ) 7–6, 6–4; **J Knowle** (Aut) bt V Snyman (SA) 4–6, 6–4, 6–3; **D Sapsford** bt N Behr (Isr) 6–3, 3–6, 7–6.

CZECH WOMEN'S OPEN (Prague): **First round:** **B Schultz-McCarthy** (Neth) bt R Zrubakova (Slovak) 6–2, 6–1; **R Dragomir** (Rom) bt M Grzybowska (Pol) 6–3, 4–6, 6–4; **K Habsudova** (Slovak) bt G Leon-Garcia (Sp) 6–4, 6–3; **W Probst** (Ger) bt P Schnyder (Switz) 3–6, 7–6, 6–4; **D Chladkova** (Cz) bt M Nekvapilova (Cz) 6–7, 6–0, 6–1; **M Maruska** (Aut) bt K Studenikova (Slovak) 6–0, 6–2; **N Louarsabishvili** (Bela) bt S Kleinova (Cz) 3–6, 6–2, 6–2; **A Dechaume-Balleret** (Fr) bt E Martincova (Cz) 6–4, 4–6, 6–4; **R Bobkova** (Cz) bt E Melicharova (Slovak) 6–3, 6–4; **L Richterova** (Cz) bt R Pelikanova (Cz) 6–3, 6–1; **J Kruger** (SA) bt O Barabanshchikova (Bela) 6–3, 6–2; **V Martinek** (Ger) bt P Langrova (Cz) 6–4, 6–3; **M Diaz-Oliva** (Arg) bt P Suarez (Arg) 6–2, 6–2; **R Simpson** (Can) bt K Boogert (Neth) 7–5, 6–1; **C Cristea** (Rom) bt A Gersi (Cz) 6–2, 0–1 ret; **L Courtois** (Bel) bt J Kandarrova (Cz) 6–2, 7–6.

Athletics

GREAT BRITAIN TEAM FOR THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Athens, August 1–10).

MEN

100m: **I Mackie** (Pitreavie); **D Campbell** (Belgrave); **M Devonish** (Coventry).
200m: **D Walker** (Newham and Essex B); **O Dako** (Sale); **J Golding** (Blackheath).
400m: **I Thomas** (N&EB); **M Richardson** (Windsor, Slough & Eton); **J Baulch** (Cardiff).
800m: **A Hart** (Coventry); **M Sesay** (Leeds).
1500m: **J Mayock** (Cannock), **K McKay** (Sale).
5,000m: **R Denmark** (Basildon).
110m hurdles: **T Jarrett** (Haringey), **C Jackson** (Brecon); **A Tulloch** (Belgrave).
400m hurdles: **C Rawlinson** (Belgrave); **G Jennings** (N&EB).
3,000m steeplechase: **R Hough** (Sheffield).
Marathon: **R Nerurkar** (Bingley); **D Buzza** (Cornwall); **D Rixon** (Bridgend).
High jump: **B Reilly** (Belgrave); **D Grant** (Haringey), **S Smith** (Liverpool H).
Pole vault: **N Buckfield** (Crawley).
Triple jump: **F Agyepong** (Shaftesbury); **J Edwards** (Gateshead).
Shot putt: **S Pickering** (Haringey); **M Proctor** (N&EB).
Discus: **R Weir** (Birchfield); **G Smith** (Solihull).
Hammer: **D Smith** (Belgrave).
Javelin: **S Backley** (Cambridge); **M Hill** (Leeds); **N Nieland** (Shaftesbury).
4x100m relay (from): **Mackie, Devonish, Walker, Golding, D Braithwaite** (Haringey), **D Chambers** (Belgrave).
4x400m relay (from): **Thomas, Richardson, Baulch, R Black** (Team Solent), **S Baldock** (Hastings), **M Hylton** (WS&E).

WOMEN

100m: **S Jacobs** (Shaftesbury); **M Richardson** (WS&E).
200m: **K Merry** (Birchfield), **Jacobs**.
400m: **D Fraser** (Croydon H); **A Curbishley** (Edinburgh WM).
800m: **K Holmes** (Ealing, Southall).
1500m: **Holmes, J Pavey** (Bristol).
5,000m: **P Radcliffe** (Bedford).
Marathon: **S Goldsmith** (Edinburgh WM); **C Hunter-Rowe** (Horwich); **A Mair** (Newport).
100m hurdles: **D Allahgreen** (Liverpool); **A Thorp** (Wigan).
400m hurdles: **S Gunnell** (Essex).
High jump: **D Marti** (Bromley).
Long jump: **J Wise** (Coventry).
Triple jump: **A Hansen** (Shaftesbury); **M Griffith** (WS&E).
Shot putt: **J Oakes** (Croydon).
Discus: **S Drew** (Sutton).
Javelin: **T Sanderson** (Hounslow); **S Holroyd** (Essex).
Heptathlon: **D Lewis** (Birchfield).
4x400m relay (from): **Fraser, Curbishley, Gunnell, M Pierre** (Croydon), **M Thomas** (Birchfield), **L Hanson** (Birchfield).

Baseball

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Boston 18, Detroit 4; Baltimore 9, Toronto 5; NY Yankees 2, Cleveland 3 (in 10); Kansas City 2, Milwaukee 1 (in 14); Minnesota 5, Chicago WS 3; Anaheim 6, Texas 5; Oakland 2, Seattle 6. **NATIONAL LEAGUE:** Florida 5, Montreal 4 (in 12); Cincinnati 4, St Louis 2; Pittsburgh 5, NY Mets 4; Atlanta 10, Philadelphia 6; Chicago Cubs 7, Houston 9 (in 15); Colorado 12, Los Angeles 14 (in 10); San Diego 5, San Francisco 3.

Cricket

BOYES STORES CHALLENGE: Scarborough: Yorks 300–7 (A McGrath 114, G M Hamilton 60) Holland 218–8 (K J van Noortwijk 82). Yorks won by 82 runs. **SECOND XI C'SHIP** (today: 11.0): **The Oval:** Surrey 337–5 (D J Bicknell 132no, J N Batty 68no) v Kent. **Taunton:** Warks 296 (A Singh 74). Somerset 36–1. **MINOR COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP** (today, 11.0): **Carlisle:** Cambs 101 (Fielding 4–22). Cumberland 268–4 (A D Mawson 80, S J O'Shaughnessy 68no, G J Clarke 60). **Weymouth:** Dorset 180–8 (J J E Hardy 52no) and 23–1. Cornwall 148. **AON RISK TROPHY: Bristol:** Gloucestershire 292–7 (D R Hewson 108). Worcestershire 137 (Sheeraz 4–37). Gloucestershire won by 155 runs. **Chelmsford:** MCC YCs 285. Essex 258. MCC won by 27 runs. **Welbeck CC:** Derbyshire 187. Nottinghamshire 189–3 (G F Archer 127no). Nottinghamshire won by seven wickets.

Cycling

TOUR DE FRANCE: Stage 10 (Luchon to Andorra, 252.5km): 1, J Ullrich (Ger) Telekom 7hr 46min 7sec; 2, M Pantani (It) Mercatone Uno at 1min 8sec; 3, R Virenque (Fr) Festina same time; 4, F Casagrande (It) Saeco 2.00; 5, B Riis (Den) Telekom 3.23; 6, L Dufaux (Switz) Festina 3.23; 7, J M Jimenez (Sp) Banesto 3.46; 8, F Escartin (Sp) Kelme; 9, A Olano (Sp) Banesto; 10, A Elli (It) Casino all st. **Also:** 58, M Sciandri (GB) La Francaise des Jeux 27.14; 151, C Boardman (GB) GAN 43.01. **Overall standings:** 1, Ullrich 55hr 00min 54sec; 2, Virenque at 2min 38sec; 3, Olano 4.46; 4, Riis 4.53; 5, Pantini 5.29; 6, F Escartin (Sp) Kelme 5.48. **Also:** 81, Sciandri 1:01.54; 94, Boardman 1:10.42. **Points category:** 1, E Zabel (Ger) Telekom 264pts; 2, F Moncassin (Fr) GAN 173; 3, J Blijlevens (Neth) TVM 159; 4, N Minali (It) Batik 121; 5, R McEwen (Aus) Rabobank 112; 6, M Traversoni (It) Mercatone Uno 111. **King of the mountains:** 1, Virenque 209; 2, L Brochard (Fr) Festina 160; 3, Ullrich 138; 4, Pantani 100; 5, Casagrande 93; 6, Dufaux 92.

Fixtures

Football

INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT: **Third-place play-off:** Celtic v Newcastle/Eindhoven (6.0). **Final:** Derry v Newcastle/Eindhoven (8.15).
FRIENDLY MATCHES: Crewe v Bolton (7.45); Everton v Rangers (7.45); Exeter v QPR (7.30); Gretna v Carlisle (7.30); Kettering v Peterborough (7.30); Kingstonian v Barnet (7.30); Newcastle Tn v Port Vale (7.30); Penzance v Leicester (7.15); Sutton Utd v Fulham (7.30); Yeovil v Barnsley (7.45); York v Middlesbrough (7.30).

Rugby Union

TOUR MATCH: Ontario v Wales (7.30, Hamilton).

Rugby League

ACADEMY: First Division: Batley v Huddersfield (7.30).
ALLIANCE CHAMPIONSHIP: Leeds v Halifax (7.30).

Cricket

BRITANNIC ASSURANCE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP (four days: 11.0): **Cheltenham:** Gloucestershire v Derbyshire. **Canterbury:** Kent v Leicestershire. **Old Trafford:** Lancashire v Sussex. **Northampton:** Northamptonshire v Essex. **Trent Bridge:** Nottinghamshire v Warwickshire. **Guildford:** Surrey v Hampshire. **Scarborough:** Yorkshire v Durham. **TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES** (three days: 11.0): **Cardiff:** Glamorgan v Australians. **TOUR MATCH** (three days: 11.0): **Worcester:** Worcestershire v Pakistan A. **SECOND XI CHAMPIONSHIP** (three days: 11.0): **South Shields:** Durham v Leics. **Chelmsford:** Essex v Lancs. **Southampton:** Hants v Yorks. **Southgate CC:** Middx v Gloucs. **Wellingborough:** Northants v Notts. **Hove:** Sussex v Glamorgan. **Halesowen:** Worcs v Derbys.

Peak time . . . Jan Ullrich climbs towards Arcalis and the yellow jersey PASCAL RONDEAU

Tour de force as Ullrich ascends

William Fotheringham in Arcalis

THE Tour de France found a new master here yesterday when the young German Jan Ullrich rode the entire field into oblivion, including his team leader Bjarne Riis. The race is only halfway through but the 23-year-old has taken a serious option on overall victory.

The 10 days since the start of the Tour had seen much speculation over the extent to which Ullrich would be restrained by team loyalty if he was in better form than his leader, as seemed to be the case when he was faster than the Dane in the opening time-trial and stronger on the first mountain stage.

The first few metres of the final ascent of the toughest stage of the race — 157 miles through the Pyrenees, eight hours in the saddle — made all that debate seem mere hot air.

As the road steepened, Ullrich went to the front of the little group which contained all the favourites, and accelerated. No one was able even to consider holding his pace, and only the specialist climbers Richard Virenque and Marco Pantani made any serious attempt to catch him.

Ullrich was simply unstoppable, turning the pedals without any hint of effort apart from a look of intense concentration on his freckled face and a shine of sweat around his mop of red hair.

On a climb of this steepness — a super category, the hardest in the Tour — even the best riders will sometimes stand on the pedals to maintain speed, but Ullrich never looked as if he would have to resort to this.

By the end of the six-mile climb he had carved out time gaps which may well be conclusive. Virenque and Pantani, perhaps the two best climbers this decade, were over a minute back. Abraham Olano of Spain, who was probably the biggest threat to Ullrich yesterday morning, was almost four minutes behind. Riis was over three minutes adrift.

The man who started the day in the yellow jersey, France's Cédric Vasseur, lost almost eight minutes, over a minute in every mile, although he had actually started the ascent ahead of Ullrich after making a final defiant attack in the valley.

He clearly knew what was coming. The last man to look this superior to the rest on a mountain-top finish was Miguel Indurain, who managed it only a couple of times in his five Tour wins.

Vasseur's erstwhile team leader Chris Boardman, suffering from a stiff neck after his crash on Monday, again figured among the day's big losers, finishing 43 minutes behind in the "autobus", the group of non-climbers. A decision on whether he continues will be made this morning.

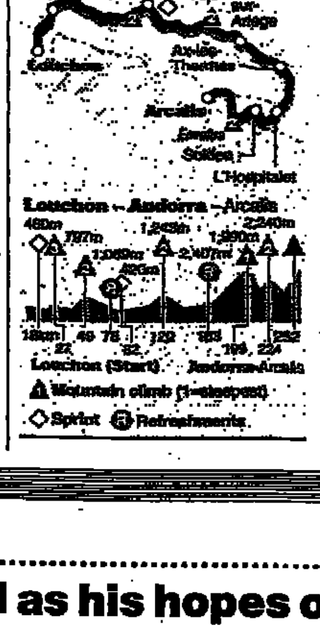
Ullrich was keen to maintain the illusion that he made his move in Riis's interests, and indeed he did look around as he attacked to assess the state of the man he helped win the Tour last year. "My job was to keep the tempo so high that the group would shrink, but I saw the others could not keep up so I decided to go for the stage win."

This was mere diplomacy. Two mountains earlier he had been told by the manager of his and Riis's Deutsche Telekom team to forget team loyalty. Riis greeted his nemesis with a hug and a handshake after the finish, and he is now likely to revert to his old role as a team man.

He was as generous in defeat as he was ruthless in victory last year. "Ullrich was super. He was the strongest and he needed to attack," he said.

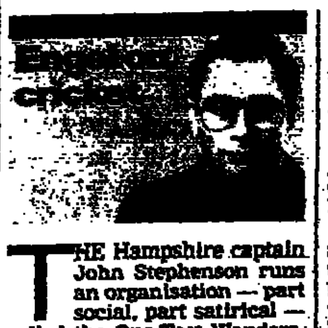
There was room for sentiment earlier as well, when the peloton stopped for a few minutes' reflection at the memorial on the Col de Portet d'Aspet to the late Fabio Casartelli, who died after a high-speed crash there in the 1995 Tour. That event is now firmly in the Tour's past; its immediate future appears to lie with Ullrich.

● *William Fotheringham is assistant editor of Cycling Weekly*



Cricket

Les Jackson, only two Tests but wonderful



THE Hampshire captain John Stephenson runs an organisation — part social, part satirical — called the One-Test Wonders, for all those players discarded by the England selectors, in their traditionally infinite wisdom, after only one cap.

No one has founded anything for the Two-Test Wonders. There are heaps of them. Monty Bowden would never have known that the jolly little touring games he played in South Africa in 1888 were to be sanctified with the phrase "Test match". He stayed behind after the tour, went north with Rhodes and died in a mud hut, aged 27.

Some are still playing, though the chances of them adding to their two might be pretty slender: Mark Lathwell of Somerset, who seemed to have no ambition, Richard Blakey of Yorkshire, Paul Taylor of Northamptonshire, Martin Bicknell of Surrey, who was done down by constant injuries, and Ronnie Irani of Essex.

Some of these would never have got a game in the eras of better cricketers or better selection panels; people who didn't just look at the averages and stick in the first names they saw. But look back to when there were selectors who knew their own mind, and the Two-Test Wonders assume different qualities.

Keith Andrew of Northamptonshire, it was agreed just about universally, was the best wicketkeeper on the circuit for most of the Fifties and Sixties. He played only twice, and there was a nine-year gap between his games.

And then there was Les Jackson. Regular listeners to Test Match Special, even the young ones, will know the name. As soon as it gets mentioned, Fred Trueman drops his normal gruff no-one-else-can-play aggressiveness. You can almost hear the mist forming in his eyes, as he pays something very close to obeisance. Trueman played 67 Tests, Jackson only the two — 12 years apart.

In Derbyshire, Jackson is regarded as a sort of cricketing Hanratty, victim of an obvious miscarriage of justice that the authorities were too pig-headed ever to admit. The Jackson experience was somewhere at the back of everyone's mind when the modern committee began feuding with the selectors about the treatment of their fast bowlers.

Most of the Two-Test Wonders are unlikely to rate a full-scale biography, unless they achieve something outside the game ("Graham Stevenson: A Statesman's Life"). Jackson is an exception. No fancy London publisher, of course, but the author is out of the common run: Mike Carey, once of these pages and for some years cricket correspondent of the Daily Telegraph.

To Carey, Jackson is an unsullied hero and a bit of a victim, his heroism enhanced by his phlegmatic attitude to the victimisation. He is now 76, but without rancour.

Between 1947 and 1963 Jackson was a stunningly successful bowler in county cricket: 1,733 wickets at 17.36 (a better average than Trueman's). He bowled fast-medium seamers off a lowish trajectory, largely on favourable Derbyshire pitches. But uncovered pitches, even in Test matches, meant anywhere could be favourable, and often was.

He was born in Whitwell, a north Derbyshire mining village, in 1921, an ill-starred year for a cricketer. It meant he was 18 in 1939. He wanted to go into the navy; the government said he had to stay down the pit. Jackson was 26 before he could play his first county match, and he made his reputation at once. In 1949 he played a Test, against New Zealand, and did respectably; but it was just the one. When they came to pick the 1950–51 touring party to Australia the selectors preferred John Warr (Varsity and Middlesex), who also played only two Tests, and took one for 281.

Almost everyone rated Jackson. Carey quotes Colin Cowdrey as saying Jackson should have played ahead of Trueman and Statham in Lord's Tests for much of the Fifties, because the pitches would have suited him. Jackson's team-mate Cliff Gladwin called his treatment "a crime against cricket".

THERE were two exceptions, but both were crucial influences at Lord's: one was Freddie Brown, the England captain in the early Fifties, who said Jackson did not have the stamina for a second or third spell; the other was Gubby Allen, for years the iron ruler on selection matters, a man who had very firm views about who had class and who hadn't. He was usually right. Allen thought Jackson's action wasn't good enough.

So he never did come back, until 1961, when given his second Test — aged 40. He did okay too. Then he was dropped again. Outrageously unlucky? It gets said a lot about cricketers on the fringes, but it hangs around Jackson with more persistence than around anyone else. Maybe that's because it's true.

Les Jackson — A Derbyshire Legend, by Mike Carey (Tranters, Markeaton Printing Works, Derby DE22 3AX, £9.50 inc p&p)

Hollioake gets young England call

BEN HOLLIOAKE was named yesterday in the England Under-19 squad to play in the two one-day internationals against Zimbabwe at the start of next month despite the opposition of Surrey's coach Dave Gilbert, who said: "I'm unhappy about it because Ben has progressed beyond that level."

Hollioake hit 98 in the Benson and Hedges Cup final win against Kent at Lord's. Also included are the England A and Middlesex batsman Owais Shah and Ryan Sidebottom, son of the former Yorkshire seamer Arnold.

ENGLAND UNDER-19: A Flintoff (Lancs, capt), O Shah (Middx), S Peters (Essex), D Sales (Northants), B Hollioake (Surrey), D Nash (Middx), Z Morris (Yorks), G Batty (Yorks), A Tudor (Surrey), P Franks (Notts), D Cooker (Glam), C Read (Gloucs), R Sidebottom (Yorks).

Sport in brief

Rugby Union

England look likely to come up against the All Blacks in the group stage of the 1999 World Cup after yesterday's draw in Dublin. Two European qualifying places are available in Pool B and England are expected to land one of them for group matches at Twickenham; New Zealand are the seeded side in the four-strong pool.

Fencing

All three British representatives lost in the first round of the women's foil event at the world championships in Cape Town yesterday. Fiona McIntosh went down 15–10 to the Russian Olga Charkoa, Linda Strachan was beaten 15–14 by the Ukrainian Tatiana Savtchenko, and Lucy Harris lost 15–8 to Gesine Schiel of Germany. Ireland's John Twomey was beaten 15–3 by the Italian Sandro Cuomo in the first round of the men's epee.

Basketball

The Manchester Giants have signed the 6ft 3in former Birmingham Bullets forward Emiko Etete from the German club Augsburg.

Cricket
News and Scores
0891 22 88 +

Counties update

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The Guardian INTERACTIVE

Rugby League

Gregory fined as his hopes of Great Britain job recede

Paul Fitzpatrick

ANDY GREGORY, the Salford coach, was fined £1,500 by the Rugby Football League yesterday for criticising the referee Robert Connolly after the Reds' game at Leeds.

If Gregory holds his tongue for the next 12 months, as he has promised to do, he will have to pay only a third of the fine. The incident may, though, have harmed his chances of becoming the Great Britain coach, a job for which a few months ago he appeared to have few rivals.

Gregory called Connolly a "big-head" and a "poser" after Salford had lost to Leeds Rhinos at Headingley a week last Sunday.

He was found guilty of causing "hurt and injury to the game". Gregory was a volatile player, and the same traits are emerging in his coaching.

However, earlier this year, he was favourite to replace Phil Larder, whose contract has ended, as the Great Britain coach for the visit of the Australians in the autumn.

Ian Russell's first game for Oldham Bears will be against his former club North Queensland Cowboys when the World Club Championship resumes on Friday. Russell, a loose forward, joined Oldham last week.

John Plath, the Brisbane Broncos forward, will miss the game against Wigan at Central Park on Sunday. He was suspended for two matches after being found guilty of a spear tackle against Canberra Raiders.

The Open Championship

Home-town favourite pleads for a touch of Montymania

Michael Britten and David Davies at Troon

COLIN Montgomerie hopes that a tidal wave of Montymania will carry him to victory in the Open Championship in his home town. The Scot, who was brought up barely an eight-iron from the Royal Troon clubhouse, has come home as Europe's undisputed best, as second favourite to Tiger Woods and rejoicing in the best form of his 10 years as a professional.

Now he wants Scottish fans to give him the antidote to Tigermania on the links where he played as a teenager as he seeks that long-awaited first major after three near misses, the most recent being the US Open last month.

"This is it for me as far as major championships are concerned," said the European No. 1. "It would be the ultimate sporting thrill for me to win here. This is home. *This is where my family* are, where my wife is from and where my father works as club secretary.

"I have been looking forward to this week for seven years so now hopefully I can get as loud a cheer as Tiger gets in the United States. I am looking forward to playing in the atmosphere that he enjoys over there. It will help me to have the crowd behind me.

"Augusta [for the US Masters] was made for Tiger and if he doesn't win there every second year I will be very surprised. But, like the US Open, this is a more level playing-field. *With a bit of a breeze* blowing it doesn't necessarily suit his game.

"Tom Lehman, Ernie Els, Greg Norman and myself were not at the top of our games at Augusta and were unable to put more pressure on him. But we have all won in the past five weeks so right now it is a much closer call."

Montgomerie's father James, who retires at the end of next month, is upbeat about the chances of the sports-loving 10-1 second favourite he brought up in the Ayrshire seaside resort. "Colin was the Gavin Hastings of his day as a rugby full-back and was a fast bowler and big-hitting cricketer," he said. "He has the ability to win here but it is mental attitude that is so important."

If Montgomerie is looking forward to local support, Woods has found *in the States* that enthusiasm can go too far; he was mobbed at the Phoenix Open.

"Security broke down," he said, "and I *got* knocked down. I was trying to sign autographs as I walked along but unfortunately people have sharp pens and one of them *cut* me under the eye. Yes, it can get hairy at times."

Since that incident the US Tour has ensured that he goes nowhere on a tournament site without *a team of marshals* who surround him and move through the crowds like a snow-plough.

Woods, who is subjected to *constant death threats* by racists in the US, has gone unmolested in Scotland and sounded almost relieved to be here, prompting the joking question whether he was going to join the European Tour.

He deflected that one with a smiling "No comment" but he did say he thought the hate mail would hound him throughout his career. "When you are playing a sport in which you are in the minority, of course there is going to be some animosity," he said.

"It was like that for Arthur Ashe, for Jackie Robinson, the baseball player, and for *numerous other professional* athletes. Until we understand and respect everyone for the kind of person they are, not just by looking at pigmentation, of course the problem is going to be there."

Asked whether, in view of the threats, he ever wished he were less of a public figure — a businessman, perhaps — he said: "No, I like being out here. I like to work on my tan."

No regrets . . . 'Troon really launched my career; this is where I became known,' says Nick Price, practising on the course yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

Price's field of shattered dreams

David Davies finds a former Open winner making a memory-stirring return to Troon

WHENEVER Nick Price flies to another time zone, to a place he has been before, he adopts a routine he finds helps him conquer jet lag.

"I imagine the airport, the road to the golf course, the clubhouse, the locker rooms and the course itself. I think about particular holes and what I did there last time, and *I find that, because I prepare* for it that way, it lessens the impact of jet lag."

Price flew into Scotland on Sunday and to Royal Troon, a course he *not only knows* well but one he simply cannot forget.

It was on this bleak stretch of Ayrshire coastline back in 1982 that he found himself in a position where it might have been easier to win a major championship than to lose it. But lose it he did, and later had to listen, mortified, as Tom Watson admitted that he felt he had not won the title, it had been given to him.

With four holes to play Price led by two but at the 15th he drove into the left rough. He remembers vividly what happened next. "When I got there I found I had a perfect lie. I could hit whatever club I needed to from the lie, *but the problem was that* there was a small ridge just in front of me and unless I took a sufficiently lofted club the ball would crash into it. It was 198 yards to the flag, into the wind and I really needed a two-iron, but because of the ridge I took the four."

He hit the shot perfectly, but unfortunately it still caught the ridge, the ball was deflected sharp right and into a pot bunker from which Price could only just get out.

He took a double-bogey six, dropped a shot at the short 17th and the glory was gone. It was a finish that might have scarred forever a young player.

So did Price depart from routine on this latest flight? Surely he would not want to remember a course and a place where his dreams were dashed and where, moreover, the damage was inflicted by himself?

"Not at all," he said yesterday. "Troon really launched my career. This is where I be*came known to the golfing* world. My name was at the top of the leader board for most of the week and I remember thinking at the end of it: *'One day I'll have my* name at the top when everyone's finished playing.'"

That day eventually came, but not for another 10 years, when he won the US PGA. Two years later he finally won an Open, at Turnberry. Now he believes that if he had won in 1982 as a 25-year-old he would have been too young to benefit from the experience. "I would not be the person or the player I am now if I had won then," he said.

As the Zimbabwean has been unfailingly kind and generous throughout his career it is difficult to see how he might be different as a person, but as a player it is possible he might not have acquired the depth of knowledge about the golf swing that he now has. "You can have all the talent in the world," he said, "but you can't maximise *it if you don't have the funda*mentals. Look at Seve, for instance, he's totally baffled by the game now."

Price is a David Leadbetter man, one of the originals in fact, and partly responsible for Nick Faldo going to see golf's best-known guru. To Leadbetter's great credit he never attempted to slow down one of the fastest swings in golf, ensuring instead that, despite its speed, everything was where it should be, when it should be. The result has been three majors so far, the 1992 and 1994 US PGAs and the 1994 Open. He is the last to win successive major championships and one of only six since the end of the second world war to do so, Ben Hogan, Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Lee Trevino and Watson being the others.

The championships were won with a caddie, "Squeaky" Medlin (he had a high-pitched voice), who remains the only caddie to receive a fully fledged press interview at a *major championship. It came* after he had caddied for John Daly in the 1991 US PGA — an event Daly got into only because Price withdrew — and then for Price when he won the following year.

This partnership is no more. On the Thursday of the US Open a month ago, Price received a call from Squeaky's wife saying that her husband, being treated for leukaemia, was being sent home from hospital. "I knew from her voice," said Price, "that he was being sent home to die. It was a terrible shock."

Price played out the championship, jumped on a plane on the Sunday night and went to see his former caddie, who died the next day.

Price turned 40 this year and believes he can sustain a top-level effort for "another four to five years". He said: "Back in '94 I felt that if I played smart golf, methodical but not regimented, I would have a chance to win. In those *days I might hit a poor shot* and be left with a 15-foot putt for a par, and I holed it. I always holed par putts.

"Something of that has gone now. My form has been good but there is one missing piece of the puzzle. I am doing everything well but nothing great. If I can just turn something in my game up one notch I can win. If I do, there's no question, I'll dedicate it to Squeaky."

Two men who can knock spots off Tiger

Mike Selvey meets Rick Adams and Mark Glynn whose drives would sail over 'Seal'

"SEAL". Remember the name, it is the opening hole at the Royal Troon course. It measures 364 yards, and the majority of pros play it with a long iron and something very lofted. Given a following breeze and a bit of run, however, they say that Tiger Woods may just have a dart at driving it this week. Awesome, eh?

Well, phooey to that. In the next couple of days a letter will drop into the offices of the Guinness Book *of Records asking for* ratification of a feat that makes Tiger seem more like Miss Tiggywinkle.

Rick Adams and Mark Glynn, respectively *former* football and rugby league players long since turned golfers, are in town, and last evening they put on the exhibition that they take around the world on behalf of the club manufacturer Taylor Made. They showed an unprecedented capacity for hitting a standard golf ball prodigious distances; people are gobsmacked at the absurdity of it.

The witnesses last week at Belton Woods, a club near Grantham, included Bernard Gallacher when one of the two (neither will say which: this is a team effort) drove a carry of 365.26 yards. A carry, mark you, not bouncing it down a tarmac road in the way that Don Johnson put one over Kevin Costner in the film Tin Cup.

"The .26 is important," said Adams. "I think we've maximised it now; honestly, I can't see anyone going further than that." It broke their own world record of 359 yards. If they played "Seal" with such power at their disposal they would not only drive the green but fly the stick. *Now that is awesome.*

Tees for two . . . Glynn (rear) and Adams take aim and fire

Make no mistake, these are two big men, with oaken legs and forearms like York hams. A handshake from *either* could mean a plaster cast for a month for the unwary. But though their coach, the Welshman Jon Skuse, describes his first sight of them as "freaky", they are certainly not freaks.

Instead, spectators at the Ultimate Golf Show are witness to considerable beef, undeniably, but allied to skill, technique and technology which produces an *effect which the commenta*tor Peter Alliss has called "the most powerful and precise striking of a golf ball" he has seen.

"Each year in the States," said Glynn, "there are 40,000 entrants for the World Long Driving Championship, and just 12 get to the final. We actually get an invitation for the final, and each year we turn it down because that is not what we are about. These people can hit a ball but most of them can't play golf.

"We are professionals, though; we can hit accurate feathery 80-yard wedges like the rest. It is just that we can hit 180-yard bombs as well with the same club without losing accuracy.

"A fair proportion of the crowd at our exhibitions are the tournament players themselves who come not *to gawp or giggle* but to learn. We produce pure, precision striking, not just with the driver but through the bag, and they respect *totally* what we do."

"We use the same standard Taylor Made equipment and Tour-specification Top Flite Strata balls that anyone can buy in the pro shop," said Adams. "But most players hit with back-spin that makes the ball soar. Instead the secret is in fully coached golf swings, maximised by a technique which involves low spin, coupled, for the driver, with a precise launch angle and tee height.

"Tiger has it: nine-degree driver with the centre of gravity up the face, launch angle of 12 degrees, 2,500rpm and 176 mph ball velocity. Our spec is precisely the same but our ball velocity is between 198 and 205mph. It took us three years and a lot of hard work to get where we are now."

Adams turned and thumped a wedge out of the teaching bay at the Prestwick Golf Centre, down the road from Troon, and into the drizzle. It dropped beyond a marker at 220 yards. There was nothing more to say.

Tee times

(GB/Ire unless stated; first time=tomorrow's start; second time=Friday's start; *=amateur; bold=star groups)

07.15; 11.35	*S Webster, A Cabrera (Arg), D Howell
07.25; 11.45	T Purtzer (US), R Boxall, W Westner (SA)
07.35; 11.55	P Blackmar (US), J Spence, S McCarron (US)
07.45; 12.05	N Sato (Jap), P McGinley, B Watts (US)
07.55; 12.15	R Goosen (SA), S Torrance, P Stankowski (US)
08.05; 12.25	P Lonard (Aus), *C Watson, J Maggert (US)
08.15; 12.35	**L Westwood, S Stricker** (US), **G Norman** (Aus)
08.25; 12.45	P-U Johansson (Swe), S Mori (Jap), J Nicklaus (US)
08.35; 12.55	**C Montgomerie, T Watson** (US), **M McNulty** (Zim)
08.45; 13.05	**R Russell, F Couples** (US), **E Romero** (Arg)
08.55; 13.15	A Coltart, M Calcavecchia (US), T Izawa (Jap)
09.05; 13.25	**I Woosnam, R Allenby** (Aus), **P Stewart** (US)
09.15; 13.35	**M O'Meara** (US), **S Maruyama** (Jap), **S Lyle**
09.25; 13.45	T Bjorn (Den), J Cook (US), S Ames (Tri)
09.35; 13.55	**J M Olazabal** (Sp), **T Kite** (US), **N Ozaki** (Jap)
09.45; 14.05	P Broadhurst, J Leonard (US), W Riley (Aus)
09.55; 14.15	J Van de Velde (Fr), L Roberts (US), P Senior (Aus)
10.05; 14.25	**D Love** (US), **S Ballesteros** (Sp), **H Miyase** (Jap)
10.15; 14.35	I Baker-Finch (Aus), R Claydon, B Tway (US)
10.25; 14.45	R McFarlane, B Andrade (US), M Roe
10.35; 14.55	A Magee (US), P Curry, J Coceres (Arg)
10.45; 15.05	K Duke (US), S Bottomley, *Y Taylor (US)
10.55; 15.15	A Sandywell, G Clark, B McGovern
11.05; 15.25	J Remesy (Fr), V Phillips, D Tapping
11.15; 15.35	R Karlsson (Swe), T Gogele (Ger), C Perry (US)
11.25; 15.45	J Kernohan (US), G Ghei (India), P Hinton
11.35; 07.15	W Bladon, A Crerar, P Haugsrud (Nor)
11.45; 07.25	*S Young, G Orr, D A Russell
11.55; 07.35	D Hart (US), I Garrido (Sp), M Bradley (US)
12.05; 07.45	**C Strange** (US), **J Lomas, E Els** (SA)
12.15; 07.55	D Edlund (Swe), J Furyk (US), Y Kaneko (Jap)
12.25; 08.05	**D Clarke, S Jones** (US), **F Nobilo** (NZ)
12.35; 08.15	**M James, M Wiebe** (US), **C Pavin** (US)
12.45; 08.25	**C Rocca** (It), **L Janzen** (US), **M Long** (NZ)
12.55; 08.35	**B Faxon** (US), **J Parnevik** (Swe), **R Green** (Aus)
13.05; 08.45	**T Woods** (US), **B Langer** (Ger), **S Elkington** (Aus)
13.15; 08.55	**P Harrington, M Brooks** (US), **C Parry** (Aus)
13.25; 09.05	**M A Martin** (Sp), **T Lehman** (US), **V Singh** (Fiji)
13.35; 09.15	P Mitchell, C Stadler (US), D Frost (SA)
13.45; 09.25	P Azinger (US), *D Olsson (Swe), G Player (SA)
13.55; 09.35	**N Faldo, T Tolles** (US), **N Price** (Zim)
14.05; 09.45	M A Jimenez (Sp), D Duval (US), G Turner (NZ)
14.15; 09.55	P Hedblom (Swe), J Haas (US), Kim Jong-duck (S Kor)
14.25; 10.05	**A Cejka** (Ger), **S Mickelson** (US), **S Appleby** (Aus)
14.35; 10.15	R Damron (US), P Baker, R Davis (Aus)
14.45; 10.25	P O'Malley (Aus), *B Howard, J Payne
14.55; 10.35	G Brand Jnr, G Day (US), C Mason
15.05; 10.45	P Fulke (Swe), J Kelly, *J Miller
15.15; 10.55	M Bradley, P Teravainen (US), S Dunlap (US)
15.25; 11.05	M Miller, G Murphy, M Mamat (Sin)
15.35; 11.15	L Batchelor, K Eriksson (Swe), C Clark
15.45; 11.25	R Jacquelin (Fr), G Dodd (Aus), J Steenkamer (Neth)

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Tottenham hint at more signings, page 14
Ullrich climbs to the yellow jersey, page 14
Troon in search of Montymania, page 15

SportsGuardian

Sports minister leads protests

'No one had the decency or the courtesy just to phone me and tell me'

– the British team captain reacts to his rejection by the selectors

Rejection dejection . . . the British team captain Roger Black is angry at the way he has been treated by the selectors PHOTOGRAPH: CLIVE BRUNSKILL

Anger mounts over Black snub

Duncan Mackay on the repercussions of a world championships bombshell

THE Minister for Sport last night led a barrage of criticism over the British selectors' decision to omit the team captain Roger Black from the 400 metres for the world championships in Athens.

Tony Banks said: "Roger is one of our best medal-winning athletes. If anything could have been done to have helped him I feel it should have, because he's been unfortunate with illness."

The Olympic silver medallist's plea for more time to prove his recovery from a virus was refused by the selectors, who opted for Jamie Baulch as the team's third 400 metres runner. Black will still make the trip but only as part of the 4 x 400m relay team.

"What would it have cost the selectors to give him the chance to prove himself?" said Frank Dick, the British Athletic Federation's former director of coaching. "I suspect if you had given Roger a few days he would have shown he is good enough for the individual place."

Black, 31, was angered at the way he had been informed of his exclusion, saying the first he knew about it was when he read it on Ceefax.

"I am very angry: it is just bad man-management," he said. "It is as if they're saying, 'Sorry, Roger, we don't respect your illness'.

"The thing that really upset me is that no one contacted me to tell me about this. No one had the decency or the courtesy just to phone me and tell me, 'Sorry, Roger, we have made the decision, you're not going to be happy with it, but we just want you to know how we feel about it'."

The decision has sparked the biggest selection row since Sebastian Coe was left out of Britain's Olympic team in 1988 and was unable to defend his 1500m title, after he had underperformed in the trials because of a cold.

Coe said last night: "I heard my news on Radio 2 while I was driving in the outside lane of the M25, returning home from seeing the British team doctor. So some things don't change."

Black said he was confident he could have proved his fitness in his scheduled comeback in Hechtel, Belgium on Saturday. "I wouldn't take a place away from Jamie if I didn't feel I could do better than he could. He's run okay, but he hasn't broken 45 seconds this year, which I did 12 times last year. I don't think I have to prove myself as an athlete, and they've not really listened to the medical situation I've had."

Malcolm Arnold, the BAF's performance director, said the decision to pick Baulch, who finished third in the trials on Sunday, was unanimous. "We did discuss it long and hard," he said. "If we upset people we are terribly sorry, but it does not lessen our regard for Roger Black.

"But if we did not pick Jamie Baulch, what message are we sending out to young athletes who are on the verge of a brilliant career?"

Nevertheless, it was insensitive of the selectors not to give more time to the man whom only last month they appointed as captain to replace Linford Christie. Black has a brilliant record for Britain, which includes two European titles, world and Olympic silver medals and, three weeks ago, a victory which helped win the European Cup.

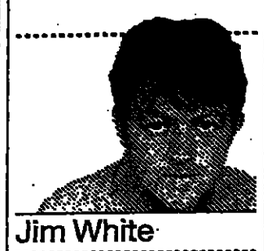
Black is also the key figure in the newly formed British Athletes' Association, which recently helped negotiate multi-million-pound sponsorship deals for the sport with Reebok and Channel 4.

"They should have given a vote of confidence to a man who has got a brilliant record for the last 12 years," said Mike Whittingham, his coach. "Roger feels like he's been kicked in the teeth."

Arnold revealed that he would petition the International Amateur Athletic Federation for a wild card if Black proved himself. But it was made clear by the IAAF that cards were available only to defending champions, including the 400m title-holder Michael Johnson, who was not picked by the United States after missing their trials because of injury.

British team, page 14

Poor relations in a game of two cultures



Jim White

THREE months is clearly too long for the average football fan to be deprived of a live fixture. How else do you explain the line I found myself in at 2.30 last Saturday, shuffling along a residential street in east London with all the speed of a traffic queue heading to Silverstone. Leyton Orient were playing Arsenal in a pre-season friendly and, on a day better suited to lying beside a swimming pool, thousands had turned up to watch.

Or rather to queue. Orient had clearly decided not to compromise a rare opportunity for profit by employing more than one gateman. A loudspeaker announcement drifting over the heads of those outside informed us that the kick-off was being delayed because of an unexpected surge in demand. Unexpected demand? The game was an all-ticket sell-out. You might have thought the club would have an idea how many people were likely to attend, and would open two turnstiles at least.

But then again, it seems Orient are out of touch with modern football. Four summers ago Arsenal went there in the same manner. If the picture of that occasion in Saturday's match programme is to be believed, it drew a crowd that just about filled a quarter of one stand. That, however, was before the football revolution, before television commercials with budgets bigger than most British films hyped up the game, before the fans' loyalty to their team was marked by the speed with which they obtained the new away shirt. Before, in short, anyone bothered with meaningless friendlies staged a full month before the genuine combat began.

This sell-out at Orient, though, was not evidence of the game's general good health. Rather, it was depressing proof of the growing gap between two cultures: the one growing ever fatter on football's new pre-eminence, the other shrinking in the former's shadow. In the yellow corner there was the financial monolith of the Premiership, with its multinational backers, its consumerist expertise, its stadiums where customers swish into architectural-award-winning grandstands two minutes before kick-off. And, appropriately in the red, there was the club in the lower reaches of the Nationwide where, thanks to comic inefficiency, punters queue for an hour for a seat with no back and an unobstructed view of a pillar.

This was tuna-in-lemon-mayonnaise bagels against burgers that leave a residue on the teeth removable only by blowtorch. This was the millionaire pop star doing his charitable bit by agreeing to open the village fete just down the road from his mansion.

Nowhere was the gap played out in starker light than on the pitch. Here shaven-headed British beef took on the light-footed Continental swagger that is the new Arsenal. It was brawn against skill, lumber against pace, scrap against sophistication. Except that the foreigners were the better tacklers.

There was nothing at stake here. Orient's biggest crowd for years (at least 90 per cent of them Gunners fans) was so unexercised by events, it watched in a silence that would not have been out of place in the reading room of the British Museum.

Yet there was a real edge on the pitch. In the past, pre-season jaunts were regarded as little more than stretching exercises; that and the opportunity to show off expensively acquired tans. On Saturday, though, studs were up and, by the end, so were elbows and fists.

THE motive, you can only assume, was envy on the part of the hosts, a boiling fury at the ludicrous difference a few dozen league places can make to your life these days. The Orient back line appeared intent on proving to Dennis Bergkamp that £20,000 a week does not protect your ankles. They gave him a lesson in football at Brisbane Road. And the lesson was: next season, only make yourself available for pre-season friendlies against teams containing fewer than three psychopaths.

It was a depressing afternoon. Walking afterwards across the park behind the ground, where dozens of local children in Arsenal shirts who had failed to get in had organised a kick-around, one realised that the decent, neighbourhood club that is Orient have been marooned so far behind by the game's economic revolution that they have as much chance of catching up as Damon Hill. And that, never mind the coming season, their board will be counting the days until next July when the rich neighbours pop round again for a friendly.

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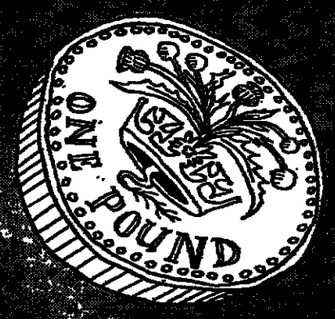

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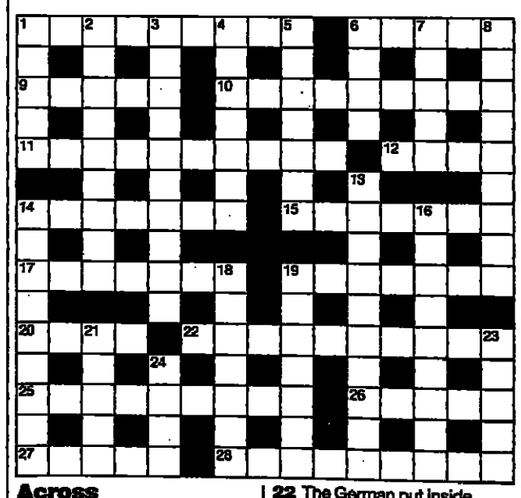
Now I'm not against the old girl getting a decent send-off. A lot of misguided people think the Queen Mother is the embodiment of all that's good about our royal family. But what has she really done? Waved a lot, smiled a lot and collected a lot of bouquets.
Roy Greenslade

G2 p5

Guardian Crossword No 21,017

Set by Crispa



Across

1 Stand for heartless rogue getting handout (9)
6 Stick by Oriental (5)
9 Deposit put on a casual jacket (5)
10 Neat figure — fruit intake is responsible for it (9)
11 A cold diet's awfully out of place (10)
12 Withdrew labour (4)
14 Desert people struggle to make progress (3,4)
15 Pen article for example backing a seaside resort (7)
17 States small change in school appears questionable (7)
19 No, no! It's new ideas that are wanted (7)
20 Others take life easy (4)
22 The German put inside aiming to be devious (10)
25 Being disrespectful about the Right is not wise (9)
26 Open a page at random (5)
27 Some bars set one's teeth on edge (5)
28 Realise this could mean arrest (9)

Down

1 Fleet for which the monarch paid out (5)
2 Hangers-on mounting a strike over places offered (9)
3 Disappeared, having proved a tea-break necessary (10)
4 Catch putting French in the gin (7)
5 They twist matched pairs without hesitation (7)
6 Face the cat! (4)
7 Risk a quarter accept (5)
8 The princess designated touching craft (9)
13 Such an individual's proclivity is revealing (10)
14 Holding back with military personnel helping (9)
16 Dislike shown for a retrogressive party in a note (9)
18 A woman has to adjust her seat (7)
19 Relentlessly making a point concerning road work (3-4)
21 The colour's very good in the main (5)
23 There's a certain craving for greenstuff after spring's end (5)
24 Some intruders are really offensive (4)

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